

India Now

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This PDF is prepared by Sukhwant Hundal in memory of his father
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INDIA NOW

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Indian Army Storms into Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar

Over 1000 People Killed in Military Action

In one of the bloodiest single attacks against a segment of its own population, the Indian army attacked and occupied Harimandir Sahib, also called the Golden Temple, in Amritsar, the holiest shrine of Sikhs on June 5. According to many military sources, over 1000 people were killed in what the army called the operation to mop-up extremists, including about 200 soldiers. The Indian government has however insisted that 492 ex-

According to some doctors who did the post-mortem of some bodies, people were shot point-blank from a very close distance with their hands tied at the back.

tremists and 90 soldiers were killed in the attack. According to the Associated



a view of the damaged Akal Takht

Press, the total number killed is at least as high as 2000. Given the past record of the government in releasing casualty figures under such circumstances, the actual number of people killed is suspected to be as high as 5,000 in what may be the bloodiest confrontation between the army and Indian citizens. The dead bodies from the Golden Temple were not handed to the relatives of those killed; according to some doctors who did the post-mortem of some bodies, people were shot point-blank from a very close distance with their hands tied at the back. There were reports of garbage trucks carrying bodies as late as June 10 night for cremation; an army source was quoted as saying that they were so many dead bodies that the army fell short of wood to burn them separately, so they were being cremated in groups.

OTHER GURUDWARAS ATTACKED

Along with Harimandir Sahib, simultaneous raids were carried on 43 other gurudwaras. Over 3000 Sikhs have reportedly been arrested in these raids. The army had taken full control of all buildings within the Golden Temple grounds as well as other gurudwaras by Thursday, June 7.

There are still pockets of extremists in Punjab who have been reported as continuing to engage in attacks on the paramilitary forces and the police. According to the Home Ministry sources, there are still 100 to 150 extremists at large. Military sources placed the number much higher.

SIKH LEADERS KILLED

Among those killed in the Golden Temple attack were extremist leader (continued on page 10)

Farooq Abdullah Overthrown

In a bare three weeks after the carnage it enacted in Amritsar, the Gandhi Government has taken another long step on the road to national disintegration. Obsessed by dynastical ambitions and its current electoral strategy of ruthlessly suppressing all minorities in order to profit from the anticipated Hindu backlash, the Gandhi regime has just driven another nail into the coffin of India's unity.

On July 2, the recently installed governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Jagmohan, a servile crony of Gandhi, who had been put there clearly to take the step his predecessor, B.K. Nehru, had refused to do, dismissed the elected government of Dr. Farooq Abdullah. Hoisted in its place were a bunch of political turncoats and opportunists led by G.M. Shah, Farooq's brother-in-law. According to news reports, Jagmohan called in Dr. Abdullah and told him that 12 members of his party were no longer supporting his government and that he was therefore dismissed from the post of Chief Minister. A short time later, Jagmohan swore in G.M. Shah as the Chief Minister along with a 14-member cabinet.

Dr Farooq, quite reasonably, request-



Farooq Abdullah: growing problems

FROM INDIA TODAY

ed that either the current Assembly be dissolved and fresh elections ordered or that the Assembly be immediately convened so that Shah's claim of a majority could be tested on the floor of the House. Jagmohan rejected both these requests. Instead the Shah regime was given one month to prove its majority. During this period, it is obvious that the Cong(I) money power will be put to maximum use to purchase legislators and induce defections from Dr Farooq's National Conference party. It should be recalled that the Cong(I) has considerable experience in doing precisely this in other states such as Haryana where it has succeeded in reducing politics to its lowest and crassest common denominator, money. However, if the tactic should fail, Gandhi would no doubt impose President's rule as her fall-back option.

For the last one year, Gandhi has been trying all kinds of foul means to oust the Farooq government. Unlike Punjab, where her action was explained as being a reaction to the provocations of the Sikh extremists, in Kashmir even this figleaf was absent. Farooq had won a solid majority in last year's election, particularly in the Kashmir valley. His ouster by means that can only be described as utterly undemocratic, cannot fail to have a reaction in the overwhelming Muslim majority population in the Valley. Moreover, as the first Kashmiri politician of stature to broaden his base of support outside of the state, his overthrow is a double blow to communal harmony and national unity.

Given Gandhi's current strategy it appears that communal harmony and national unity are the last things on her mind no matter what the long term implications for Indian survival as a country are. Opposition leaders seem to have woken up from the numbing blow of the Punjab attack and have opposed her action in Kashmir. Chandrasekhar, Janata Party President, labeled her action as "blatantly unconstitutional and immoral." Whether they will put aside their petty bickering before Hazratbal Mosque in Srinagar or some such place becomes another Harmandir Sahib remains to be seen.

House Passes Immigration Bill Analysis and Prospects

MUZAFFAR CHISHTI

In one of its most reluctant acts in recent history, the US House of Representatives has narrowly passed (216-211) the Immigration Reform and Control Bill of 1984. The Senate last year passed a similar version of the legislation, popularly called the Simpson-Mazzoli Bill. Before it becomes law, differences in the two versions of the bill have to be reconciled, and both houses of Congress have to approve for final passage. As Speaker O'Neill has stated, "The bill has a long, rocky road ahead of it."

The House vote followed a long, controversial and frequently heated debate on the floor. Members from both political parties split along nontraditional lines. The House debated about 69 amendments to the bill over a ten-day period. Opponents of the bill ranged from advocates of civil rights and workers' rights on the one hand to conservative Republicans on the other.

The bill imposes sanctions on employers for knowingly hiring undocumented workers. The maximum fine imposed is

\$2,000 per alien. Employers would be required to examine existing forms of identification (US passport, social security card, green card, or driver's license) to determine employment authorization of job applicants. The bill would also establish a toll-free telephone number that the employers can call to verify the social security numbers of potential workers.

Opponents of the bill believe that the sanction mechanism would encourage employers to discriminate against foreign-looking and foreign-sounding persons. An anti-discrimination amendment was passed by a wide margin. Labor unions however believe that neither the sanctions nor the anti-discrimination remedies are strong enough to be meaningful. Moreover, the task for enforcing employer sanctions has been given to the Immigration and Nationality Service - an agency already overburdened.

The bill would legalize undocumented aliens who can prove that they arrived in the US prior to January 1, 1982. How-

ever, all such aliens would become temporary residents for one year during which time they would be required to demonstrate knowledge of elementary English and of US history and government. At the end of one year, they would be eligible to apply for permanent residence. The Senate version has a two-tier legalization program granting temporary residence to those who arrived prior to January 1, 1980, and permanent residence to those who arrived prior to January 1977.

The House left intact the existing law on the preference system and on the admission of immediate relatives and refugees outside the quota system. The Senate version eliminates the category of married brothers and sisters.

In a major setback to defenders of immigrants' rights, the bill provides for immediate exclusion, without a hearing, of undocumented aliens.

Perhaps the most controversial element of the bill deals with the issue of

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CPM Amends Panchayat Act to Curb Corruption in Ranks

PRADIP SEN

On February 26, South Calcutta was swallowed by a tension-bound heavy cloak of intrigue. In the southern extremities along the railroad, the towns of Kasba, Selimpore and Tiljala were anticipating a spate of violent bombings and gunfire to erupt. In fact the whole city was agog with rumors that very soon Calcutta was going to be enveloped in internecine warfare between political factions. What had led to this situation?

The day before, Deva Dutta had been gunned down. Anybody familiar with the politics of the Calcutta underground knew Deva. He was a known goonda element who had had mixed fortunes during the late sixties and seventies. He had primarily worked for the Congress party and was a "hit man" during election campaigns. Deva had had several brushes with various action squads of different political groups. In fact during the intense period of 1969 to 1971, Deva was kidnapped by a CPI(ML) squad and held hostage for a few hours until CPM managed to rescue him — which explains why in later years he often collaborated with CPM on special occasions. The essence of such collaboration was "If you don't let Naxalites enter your area, I will keep them out of my area of control."

What were these areas of control? Of course, as in any other big city, this meant strictly defined geographical sectors of the city where all crime activity and the subsequent loot from it would automatically float into the coffers of gangs. The criminal activity consisted of stealing expensive copper wiring and other machinery from slow-moving railway wagons, prostitution, moneylending rackets, landholding scams, harassment of ordinary citizens and women, extortion, etc. When CPI(ML) came on the scene, all this activity was severely curtailed. All the old goonda elements departed the scene or went into permanent retirement. For a while Deva managed to carry on his gangster activity, especially working as a police informer against Naxalites. It is at this time that a CPI(ML) squad picked him up. While the actual action did not turn out to be a complete success for CPI(ML), Deva escaped from the scene with one of his hands blown off — he has since been known as hat-kata Deva, handless Deva.

After this incident, Deva's activities were severely curtailed and the area saw comparative peace. There was less of wagon-breaking, harassment of women and the regular extortion racket that went on. Very soon however, CPM through its local hood Chinmoy began making inroads into the area. Chinmoy, another close accomplice of Deva, quit his gang to work for CPM. Very soon Chinmoy started filling out the criminal vacuum created by Deva's retirement. In fact, however, Deva worked for the police, while Chinmoy worked for CPM. In a CPM-controlled police, there was not much more to it.

In recent years, CPM and Congress goondas have made their way back into the "heavy activity" areas of Kasba, Tiljala, Garfa, Selimpore, Chetla, Beliaghata, Belghoria, etc. In fact, ever since CPM came into power, the worst forms of gangsterism have resurfaced in Calcutta. The live burning of Ananda Margis, the recent killings of Naxalites, bombings of public property, setting slums on fire, daily stabbing incidents, etc., have returned to Calcutta with a vengeance. Of course, while the Congress hoodlums led by Subrata Mukherjee and other gangsters continue to try and make political capital out of the murder and violence that they themselves are unleashing on the city, CPM, which claims to be a revolutionary party of the people, stoops to exactly the same depths as Congress.

With the death of Deva, it can be expected that Chinmoy who runs the show for CPM in the Kasba region will have a field day. It is not known exactly why Deva was killed, but it is well-known that Congress had made a resurgence in certain parts of Calcutta, and it was to Chinmoy's advantage to finish off his old buddy Deva, who still worked for the Congress when he could.

PANCHAYAT CORRUPTION

More and more cases of panchayat corruption involving CPM members are coming into the open. In fact the corruption in the countryside involving CPM cadres is so rampant that its own partners in the Left Front have withdrawn from quite a few working coalitions. The panchayats are another area where CPM is losing its influence to another group of cutthroats, namely Cong(I) followers of A.B.A. Gani Khan Chowdhury, the Railways Minister from Malda district.

The corruption in the panchayats has reached such horrendous proportions that the CPM government, unable to contain its own following, has been forced to amend the Panchayat Act so that all money matters do not get controlled by the Anchal Pradhan. Also one of the features of the new amendments is for the open publication of the list of the beneficiaries and the extent of benefits each received from the panchayat. The Land Reforms Minister was forced to propose such amendments after not only opposition groups, which have been active in opposing such corruption of CPM functionaries, but also constituents of the Left Front threatened to quit in the face of such goondaism and corruption.

The Indian People's Front, which just concluded a kisan conference in Nadia district, announced a decision to step up occupation of government and benami land within the next six months. Arijit Mitra, Front convenor, claimed that this would be a test for CPM and its kisan bodies, which have lost all their past militant character with the party bosses in power.

A correspondent from Calcutta writes that the "days of PGs and PETOs may be back soon." (PGs are pipe-guns made out of steel pipes with a spring-loading action and PETOs are the hand bombs made of a quick mixture of potassium chlorate and arsenite disulphite with steel shards and shrapnel). This has been standard armament in Calcutta's streets since our parents took up arms against the British and were labeled terrorists. The only difference this time will be that while CPM will continue to carry out its murderous assaults on Naxalites, it will not be taking place in Calcutta that often. This is because of the fact that the Naxalites, through their countless organizations are no longer so easily visible. It is therefore in sheer frustration that CPM will be attacking Naxalite workers who are carrying out kisan belt work in the countryside.

CPM in Bengal leaves no illusion as to its true nature and content. In fact internal strife in the party itself is so rampant, it is reported that there are three factions within CPM fed up with one another and the leadership for the political bankruptcy of its leadership and the widespread corruption in its ranks. Those who still peddle the thought of somehow cooperating with them and winning over their ranks are not only guilty of abject naivete but are also causing great setbacks to the task of exposing the true nature of CPM.

Swamy Suspended by Janata Executive for Anti-party Activities

The National executive of the Janata party suspended Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, Janata MP, on May 24 from the party for what was called as anti-party activities. A show cause notice was issued asking Swamy to explain within 14 days why action should not be taken against him for a "serious breach of discipline."

Swamy has been very critical of Chandra Sekhar's leadership for quite sometime. He was opposed to Shekhar's walk across the country. Swamy also challenged Shekhar in a recent election for the post of party presidency, but was overwhelmingly defeated. Swamy then claimed to have had the backing of former Janata Prime Minister Morarji Desai.

Swamy had also made remarks against Karnataka Chief Minister Ramakrishna Hegde of Janata party.

The Janata party headed towards yet

another split. Swamy and his 30 supporters in Janata met and urged former Prime Minister Morarji Desai to call a national convention of party workers to take remedial steps for restoration of the moral credibility of the party. This request was made in a resolution adopted which also added, "Under the Presidency of Chandra Shekhar, the party has been derailed and the party workers demoralized."

Swamy who released the resolution to the press said, "If forced" he would form a separate party which would be "anti-Gandhi and anti-BJP." He however reiterated that the decision would be taken after consultations with Morarji Desai on his return from US.

Referring to the show cause notice sent to him for anti-party work, Swamy called it a sham, and added that it was carelessly drafted and had only vague references. He said that he would write a letter asking for specific charges.



Congress(I) Loses in By-Elections

Indira Gandhi's Congress party won only 9 out of the 24 state assembly seats in bye-elections held on May 20 and 21 in 14 states. The Gandhi party did not do well in the Hindi-speaking belt comprising Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, and Haryana. Congress(I) there could win only 2 out of 7 seats. Gandhi party had lost two of the 5 Lok Sabha seats in January. According to many analysts, these bye-elections were going to be used as a litmus test of her popularity in the Hindu-belt by Gandhi for the forthcoming general elections in January.

The Hindi-speaking belt commands 218 seats out of the 542 seats in the Lok Sabha and according to many news analysts, the voting trend there has not been comforting to Indira Gandhi. According to political observers, Gandhi has already lost Andhra to Telugu Desam, Karnataka to Janata coalition and West

Bengal and Tripura to CPM. And, the only way she can remain in power is if she wins most of the seats in the Hindi-belt.

The elections results led to many opposition party leaders and commentators expressing the fear that Gandhi may postpone the elections. Also, the ruling party has once again revived the debate in the press and political circles in New Delhi about whether presidential form of government is better for India than the present form of the government. In order for India to switch to a presidential form of government following the US model or the French model, Gandhi party needs to introduce a constitutional amendment for which 2/3 majority in the parliament is needed for its passage in addition to approval by 2/3 of the states. Indira Congress already has 2/3 majority in the Lok Sabha and is few seats short of a 2/3 majority in the Rajya Sabha.

PRESIDENT'S RULE IMPOSED IN SIKKIM

The 32-member Sikkim assembly was dissolved on May 25 and President's rule was imposed on the state. The action was taken following the resignation of 17 legislators belonging to Indira Congress which left the ruling party and its two week old government headed by Congress(I) leader BB Gurung in a minority. The resignation resulted because of the resentment on the part of supporters of former chief minister NB Bhandari who was dismissed by the state governor on

the ground that he did not have majority support after Bhandari refused to resign at Gandhi's insistence. Gandhi instead appointed Gurung as the Chief Minister two weeks ago. After his dismissal, Bhandari launched a new party called the Sikkim Sangram Parishad. Bhandari was voted to power as the head of the Sikkim Janata party in 1979; his party however merged into Indira Congress after Gandhi was elected back to power in 1980.

Crucial Time for CPM

AJIT ROY

[Ajit Roy is an independent Marxist journalist, generally sympathetic to the Left Front government in West Bengal. Ed.]

CPM's current political perspective is based on the expectation that its performance in West Bengal will lead to the party's successes in other states and thus, in the long run, help it attain power at the center. In real life, events have taken the opposite direction. If Congress(I) is losing in other states, it is consistently gaining ground in West Bengal at the cost of CPM and the Left Front. A leading Calcutta daily has juxtaposed these two facets of the current political scene in two leading articles on the same day. First, under the caption "Reverse for the Marxists," it wrote: "Of the six by-elections in West Bengal in the past one year, the Congress(I) has won four, wresting three seats from CPM and substantially reducing the Left Front's margin of victory in the other two. In last year's panchayat elections too, Congress(I) fared much better than in 1978. For a party which remains deeply divided and without any acknowledged local leadership or an effective organizational network, this is a remarkably creditable record."

The above was followed by "Verdict in the North," which said in part: "Of the nine Assembly constituencies in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh, Congress(I) has won in only four; in 1980 it had won in eight of them. It has also lost in two others in Gujarat and Maharashtra, making its overall tally look even less impressive."

This contrast becomes sharper against Cong(I)'s loss of a seat to an outfit like the Rashtriya Sanjay Manch in UP and even forfeiture of deposit at the Asifnagar constituency in Andhra to the Majlis Iftedatul Muslimen.

The latest CPM debacle in the Calcutta Belgachia West constituency, where an important organizational leader has been humbled, is not due, according to the state secretary, Saroj Mukherji, to any organizational weakness; in fact, "exemplary work" has been done by the party. "It might be," ponders Mukherji, because "the people did not like the party's style of work or there has been some defect in the political campaign."

Chief Minister Jyoti Basu, who characterized the Congress victory as something terrible, wondered if the party had failed to educate the people properly. He has also asked the party workers to go among the common people and find out their problems. The people of West Bengal have to realize through assessment and analysis the difference between West Bengal and a Congress-ruled state, he said.

The problems faced by the West Bengal people are too transparent to demand any further investigation. The CPM de-

bacle is due to its inability, not ignorance. The party had assumed office with the promise of giving some small relief to the people despite the limitations of the existing socio-political structure, as envisaged in Section 112 of the Party Program. But in the event, experience is bringing home to the people of West Bengal every day that far from relief, life is becoming harder — and more so in the sprawling Calcutta metropolitan area: transport, supply of essentials like milk or kerosene, hospital and health service, law and order, and so on. In other words, many of the appurtenances of normal existence are breaking down. As if to drive this message home, accidentally, or coincidentally in the words of the state power minister, a massive breakdown of the proverbially inefficient and chronically deficient power supply in the state took place on the eve of and during the polls.

Jyoti Basu and CPM have of course a pat explanation: limited powers of the state and stepmotherly conduct of the center. Whatever the truth of these complaints, CPM cannot be absolved of its share of responsibility. Both of the above two factors were very much present when CPM earlier adopted its program of "limited relief" and later fought and won the elections in 1977 on the basis of this promise. This implied its confidence in fulfilling this promise despite the built-in handicaps. What CPM has to learn and admit is the fundamental fact that no real relief is possible within the existing crisis-ridden structure by action from the top. The most important point for re-examination is Section 112 of the party program, which really means the entire constitutionalist orientation of the party. Can it really undertake such a review?

This, of course, does not mean that the party's "style of work" does not demand a second look. It really does and on a wide scale. To quote some glaring examples: should the CPM transport minister have passed his time in the company of the fashionable crowd in the Eden Garden to watch a game of test cricket when Cong(I) hoodlums were burning buses and trams for hours and thus creating transport chaos? Should the chief minister have gone on his China trip leaving his junior and undistinguished colleagues to deal with the ravaging enteric epidemic, which so far has taken a toll of over 2,000 lives? Or, and even more important, should the Left Front government so zealously condone the atrocities of the police and remain largely indifferent to so many cases of suspicious death of undertrials in police custody?

This is indeed a crucial time for CPM and if it fails, woe not only to itself, but also to West Bengal since it happens to be the principal Left force here.

(from Econ. & Pol. Weekly)

Indian Climbs Everest Without Oxygen

The Indian expedition to Mount Everest achieved success in early May when Phu Dorjee reached the peak. The 34-year-old mountaineering instructor used no oxygen in his ascent. His two companions, Ang Dorjee, who climbed the peak in 1978 with a West German expedition without oxygen, and Rita Gombu, an Air India stewardess, had trouble with their oxygen bottles and had to turn back. Gombu became the first Indian woman to reach a height of over 8,000 meters. She reached the summit camp on the South Summit at 8,545 meters; the peak is 8,848 meters high.

The second summit team, made up of Lt.Col. Prem Chand and Chandraprabha Aitwal, who helped set up the summit camp was expected to try climbing the peak next.

The expedition has twelve men and six women. It is the fourth Indian expedition to Everest and the first in nearly 20 years. The last one, in 1965, was also successful when nine members reached the top. The first two, in 1960 and 1962, had had to be abandoned because of bad weather.

Teams from other countries have in recent years concentrated on climbing the peak from more difficult approaches. The South Summit is the easiest way to get to the top. While near the peak, Phu Dorjee met Bulgarian climbers who had got to the top from the West Ridge.

One wonders why the Indian press and government use only the colonial name of Everest for the peak. Both Nepal and China, the two countries that the mountain is situated in, use names from their own traditions. The Nepali and Tibetan names are similar — Chomolungma. Perhaps a similar name is used in the border areas of India as well.



CPM FOR PROPORTIONAL VOTING

In a reply to a questionnaire sent by the Sarkaria Commission on center-State relations, the CPM has stated that the present system enables a party with a minority to secure a majority of seats in parliament and legislatures. According to CPM, "the disastrous consequences of this were seen during the emergency when Congress government elected on a minority vote, introduced measures which made inroads into the civil liberties and reduced parliament and state legislatures to rubber stamps of a single party — all in the name of asserting the "supremacy of Parliament."

The CPM wants to change the elec-

Immigration Bill

(continued from page 1)

temporary foreign workers. Under heavy lobbying, the House passed an amendment that would allow agricultural producers to import, on a contract basis, up to 500,000 temporary foreign workers each year to harvest perishable crops. Temporary foreign workers would work under 11-month contracts and be given minimal worker protection and no opportunity to bring their families along. Popularly called the Panetta amendment, its passage shifted many a member's position on the bill as a package. Organized labor reversed itself and lobbied against the bill after the passage of the Panetta amendment. It is believed that such a large-scale "guest-worker" program would pose a major threat to the United Farmworkers and other farmworkers' unions.

Despite the dramatic vote of the House, quick passage of the final bill cannot be taken for granted. Significant differences between the Senate and the House versions have to be ironed out. Differences on the issues of dates for legalization and the provision on temporary foreign workers will be the major concerns of the conferees. Congress is now in recess. Thus, no progress is expected until after the Democratic National Convention. Hispanic groups have decided to demonstrate against the bill at the convention. All three democratic Presidential candidates are in opposition to the bill. It is likely therefore that some Democrats will change their positions on the bill.

The conferees may not be able to come up with a compromise before the Republican convention. If the compromise is not attained some time before September, final passage by both houses just before the elections in November may prove difficult.

Mizoram

India's Congress scored an upset victory on April 29 in Mizoram; of the 26 seats of 33-seat assembly declared so far, Congress already had won 16. In the old assembly, Congress had only 9 seats against 24 held by the ruling People's Conference.

toral system through the introduction of proportional representation to select parliamentary members.

On the question of language, the party said that in the course of growing economic, social and intellectual intercourse, the people of different states would develop a language of intercommunication, most suitable to their needs. According to the party, the use of English by the center, the state governments and its other wings, and as a medium of instruction should be discarded and be replaced by the language of each individual state.

Heat Wave in Northwest Claims 80 Lives

The temperature shot up to record levels in several parts of Punjab and Rajasthan in the end of May. Over 80 people have died as a result of heat wave.

RS 15 MILLION SPENT ON RAJIV'S TIRUPATI VISIT

Andhra Chief Minister NT Rama Rao has criticized Congress(I) leaders for "spending Rs 15 million on Rajiv Gandhi's recent visit to Tirupati and for performing Pada Pooja to him."

Floods in Northeast:

Scores Dead and Over Half a Million Homeless

Floods swept parts of Northeast again this year. At least 45 people were found dead and many more missing, with over half a million made homeless. Tripura was the worst affected with 40 people killed and homes of 250,000 swept away. Over 300,000 people in Assam lost their homes as rivers in the two states overflowed their banks.

Calcutta and other parts of West Bengal were also affected by floods due to torrential rainfall in the first week of June that left at least 40 people dead there. Over 66,000 people were reported to have been made homeless.



A boat in a waterlogged Calcutta street

India Asks for Withdrawal of Soviet Military Attache

Just before the recent visit of Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Ustinov the Indian government had asked an assistant military attache at the Soviet embassy Maj. Nikolai Gololobov. The incident was kept quiet at the time and came to light only after a leak to a Supreme Court senior lawyer Prannath Lekhi who then passed it onto parliament members and the press. In a telegram to the External Affairs Minister PV Narasimha Rao, Lekhi accused the minister of misleading the public by not acknowledging the fact that Indian government had expelled Gololobov who, according to Lekhi, was an agent of the Soviet GRU military intelligence organization. Lekhi reported that Gololobov had been caught trying to steal from a Defense ministry official a copy of a letter from Bangladesh President Ershad to Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. However, according to reports, Gololobov was not expelled instead the Indian government asked Soviet government to withdraw him. At first for 12 days or so, the Soviet Ambassador refused to take any action, however later when the Indian government official threatened to take the matter with higher authorities including Defense Minister Ustinov during his visit, Gololobov was withdrawn.

This is the second time that a Soviet diplomat was asked to leave on the eve of a very important Soviet visit, a develop-

ment that is seen as a gesture on the part of Indian government to remind the Soviets that there is a limit of their special relationship. The first case was in December 1980 just before President Leonid Brezhnev's last visit to New Delhi. At that time, Indian government had asked forcefully for the withdrawal of two Soviet Embassy officials.

India seems to have a great many number of Soviet officials who have been expelled from different countries on charges of spying. Lekhi has been instrumental in identifying them because he believes that lot of Soviet officials are involved in clandestine and spying activities. He has a petition pending in the Supreme Court demanding the ouster of 3 Soviet Intelligence KGB men from India. When Lekhi blew the whistle on Gololobov, the news was carried by the national news agency, the Press Trust of India, and was published by more than a dozen newspapers across the country, but none in New Delhi except for two obscure Urdu-language dailies. Lekhi alleged that KGB was involved in the suppression of the news; according to Lekhi, the seventh department of the first directorate of the KGB deals with the Indian press and is responsible both for planting disinformation and for preventing publication of unfavorable facts.

India Urges US not to Quit UNESCO

Indian representative in the UNESCO executive board, TN Kaul, urged the US government to reconsider its decision to withdraw from the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), and not to "act in haste in anger" just because the US sometimes found itself in a minority in UNESCO. Kaul emphasized that Washington's withdrawal will be a threat to UNESCO, and it would "equally, if not more so, a loss to the great country of the opportunities they have in UNESCO of coming together with other nations and culture."

Kaul commented that while some great powers may miss the right of veto in UNESCO, they have to live with it and try to work with consensus. "They cannot and should not try to enforce veto through other means as for example, by threat to withdraw their financial support," Kaul added.

According to Kaul, no single member state or group of states can dominate or dictate to UNESCO. Kaul observed that other countries besides US too had grievances but that was not sufficient reason to withdraw. Kaul recalled that some countries would like to see the struggle against apartheid and racial discrimination supported by UNESCO more strongly and that some would like to give priority to support for national liberation movements and rights of the people. He added, "It is our task and duty to try to reconcile various seemingly conflicting demands in a spirit of mutual respect and accommodation and not by issuing threats of withdrawal if all our demands are not met."

INDIA AND PAKISTAN SIGN TOURISM AGREEMENT

Foreign secretaries of Indian and Pakistani governments signed a tourist protocol which will facilitate travel between the two countries. Initially, all tourist groups will travel by air only. Entry and exit of these groups will be through a recognized check post. The exit may not necessarily be through a recognized check post of entry. Police reporting procedures will not apply to these visitors. Double entry transit visas for 72 hours in each case will be issued to businessmen who must travel frequently between India and Pakistan. The two countries have also agreed to introduce in July through bookings for passengers to 7 designated railway stations in both countries.

It was also reported that the talks on drafts of Pakistan's nonaggression pact and India's proposal of a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation, made a great deal of progress. An official spokesperson reported that talks between the two sides were held in a cordial atmosphere and it was felt that there has been considerable progress in strengthening bilateral relations in recent months.

INDIA-US TRADE BALANCE IN FAVOR OF INDIA

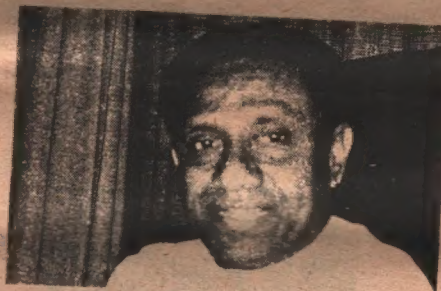
India-US trade balance turned in favor of India during 1983 for the first time in recent years. India's exports to US during 1983 reached a record \$2.2 billion while imports in the same period amounted to only \$1.8 billion. According to Union Minister for Commerce, VP Singh, there was a 56% rise of exports in 1983 over the 1982 figure. About 70% of the exports during this period was accounted for by four items - crude petroleum, diamonds, ready-made garments and cashew nuts. The US was the largest trading partner of India.

US has also emerged as the largest supplier of technology to Indian industry. The US topped the list of foreign collaboration approvals given by the Indian government in 1983. There were as many as 135 India-US agreements approved in the year, accounting for 20% of the total number of 673 agreements involving foreign parties. West Germany came down from first spot to second with 129.

Sri Lanka's PM Challenges India to Attack

In a continuing diplomatic dispute between the Indian government and Sri Lankan government over the presence of militant Lankan Tamil separatists in India, Sri Lanka's prime minister Ransinghe Premadasa challenged India to invade his country. Premadasa reportedly said in the parliament that Indira Gandhi should not play hide and seek with Sri Lanka adding "If Mrs Gandhi wants to invade Sri Lanka and conquer that country, let her do so openly." Premadasa also urged Gandhi to prove that she respected Sri Lanka's territorial integrity by expelling separatist Tamil guerrillas, who he said, were taking refuge in Tamil Nadu.

Premadasa's remarks were criticized by Sinhala politicians including those in the government as well as from Tamil leaders. National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali said later that Sri



R. Premadasa

Lankans should refrain from making any statements or taking any actions that could provoke India. According to him, Tamil separatists were trying to get India to send troops to Sri Lanka.

The Indian External Affairs Ministry accused Sri Lankan prime minister of launching virulent attack that could harm relations between the two countries.

Bhagat Singh's Sister Passes Away

Bibi Amar Kaur, the sister of Shaheed-a-Azam Bhagat Singh, passed away in a hospital in Ludhiana on May 12 following an attack of pneumonia. She was 72.

Kaur was herself active in freedom struggle against the Britishers and was jailed for 18 months in 1945. She played an important role in trying to secure the release of women abducted during the days of the partition and was given a special award by the late President Rajendra Prasad for her work.

Kaur who was given a state funeral had willed that there should be no religious ceremony at her cremation and that her body be carried by two workers belonging to the so-called untouchable community.

Kaur threw leaflets from the balcony in the Indian parliament last year to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the day when her brother along with his two comrades threw leaflets in the same parliament during the British colonial rule demanding total independence. In her leaflet, she called upon the youth to re-



Call for Broadcast Policy

Two recent official reports have challenged the way the broadcast media are run by the central government and have called for a national broadcast policy.

The Estimates Committee of Parliament says that AIR and Doordarshan should have a highly professionalized management as a bureaucratic management would not be efficient. It also said that within the existing structure of the two media, there was scope for greater autonomy and that the questions of a national policy on broadcasting and autonomy were interlinked. The Prime Minister and her various Information and Broadcasting Ministers have consistently maintained that there is no need for autonomy since the broadcast media are already doing an excellent job.

Specifically about television, the committee is unhappy over Doordarshan being converted into another outlet for the film industry instead of devising its own programs to educate, inform and explain. It is critical of the government providing only 8,000 television sets for community viewing as against the requirement of 700,000.

The proliferation of sponsored programs has greatly increased the feature film content. Any sponsor can buy pieces of film footage, string them together around a theme and put them out as a new program. The only redeeming feature, according to Iqbal Malik of the Indian Express, is that the sponsored programs are far superior to Doordarshan's own efforts. Malik also points out that the

present I&B Minister, H.K.L. Bhagat, immediately on assuming office ordered a third weekly film and a TV expansion plan just to relay Delhi under the euphemistic title of national program. From April 22, he has put on "Diff'rent Strokes," through a soft drinks sponsor.

The Estimates Committee's report came within a fortnight of the Joshi Working Group's report on TV software, also challenging the central government's broadcasting policies and practices. The ministry could not block the Estimates Committee's report since it was presented to the Lok Sabha, but it blocked the release of the Joshi report. It was only the newspapers that made the report public.

As an instance of the government's attitude to presenting the public with information, Malik points to the famous Adik affair in which the deputy chief minister of Maharashtra was accused of being drunk and misbehaving with the staff of Air India while flying to Europe; Adik was forced to resign subsequently. The broadcast media carried his defense at a press conference on April 14, without a word of what he was defending himself against.

Malik comments: "Like political or economic imperialism, there is broadcast communication imperialism. Economically professing to be in the South, claiming to be a poor developing nation ravaged by the past tyranny of politico-economic imperialism, India maintains a broadcast communication system reminiscent of feudal lords."

SOCIAL SCIENCES AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Social science prizes named after V.K.R.V. Rao have been announced recently by the Institute of Social and Economic Change for 1979 and 1980. The economics prize was awarded to Prof. Krishan Bhardwaj, Dean, School of Social Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, for 1979 and to Prof. Amiya Kumar Bagchi, center for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta for 1980. The political science prize went to Prof. Ghanshayam Shah, Director, center for Social Studies, Surat and the education prize was awarded to Prof. P.R. Pnachimukhi, Department of Economic, Bombay.

A NOTE TO OUR READERS

Because of the many developments that have taken place in India since mid-May, and because of our own temporary difficulties, we have been delayed in our normally regular publication schedule. We are producing a single double-issue for July-August, which covers the news and also goes into considerable detail into the major political developments. The next issue will be out by early September. It is planned to be a regular 12-page issue unless events dictate otherwise.

Dysentery Epidemic in West Bengal

Price for Being Poor and Homeless

DAYA VARMA

"It is like a nightmare out of science fiction." That is how the May 15 issue of India Today described the deaths caused by dysentery in West Bengal. By March 15, 628 persons, mostly children as expected, had died from dysentery and nearly 12,000 were sick. Many of these must have also died.

Is it really science fiction? Is the West Bengal government "not really to blame for the late response to the epidemic," as Professor A.K. Chakraborty of the All-India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health at Calcutta points out? Have so many people died because "this strain of bacteria is resistant to most of the normal antibiotic drugs and cannot be controlled by any known scientific method," as Dr Sudhir Chandra Pal, director of the National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases in Calcutta, asserts?

Tragically but not unexpectedly, these are all rich people's explanation for a disease that invariably affects the poor,

type I being the most serious form of infection. However, regardless of the cause of dysentery, death is almost always due to excessive fluid and salt loss. The disease by itself is self-limiting. Therefore the central question in the treatment of dysentery threatening life is the correction of fluid and salt loss and other supportive measures and not the eradication of the bacteria. So many deaths cannot be attributed to resistance of bacteria to antibiotics although most probably these organisms are resistant as in many other parts of the world.

Dysentery is a worldwide disease. However, the total number of cases of Shigella dysentery per year in the US is about 15,000 and death occurs in less than 0.1% of the cases. In countries with poor sanitation and congested living conditions, such as India and Bangladesh, the incidence is much higher, the disease is endemic with frequent epidemic outbreaks, and mortality is anywhere between 25 and 50%.



Dysentery sufferers in a hospital

especially poor children. Dysentery in any form is neither science fiction nor uncontrollable. In nonepidemic proportions it is present throughout the year in India. The incidence always increases as the summer starts and quite often approaches epidemic proportions as is the case in West Bengal. The severity of the disease including this particular form caused by Shigella dysenteriae is less determined by the virulence of the causative organism than by the nutritional status and the resistance of the victim. Death is due to a lack of supportive therapy and not because of nonavailability of the appropriate antibiotic. It is common knowledge that almost all the seriously affected patients are poor and children of the poor. Surely if it were a question of the virulence of the bacteria and its resistance to antibiotics, the disease will find a proportional number of affluent victims. But it does not.

The central question in the treatment of dysentery threatening life is the correction of fluid and salt loss and other supportive measures and not the eradication of the bacteria.

Dysentery can be caused by a number of agents such as bacteria, protozoa (amebiasis), worms and viruses. Bacillary dysentery like cholera is caused by bacterial infections with the difference that cholera is caused by a specific organism, Vibrio cholerae, and causes both diarrhea and vomiting and hence greater and faster dehydration. The most common causes of bacillary dysentery are various strains of Shigella dysenteriae;

Infection by dysentery-causing bacteria including Shigella is always by oral ingestion of contaminated food and water. And here lies the answer to why it is common in India and Bangladesh and why it is almost always limited to the poor. Because children below the age of five are particularly sensitive to the loss of body fluids and salt, dysentery takes the most serious form among this group of patients. If there is no source of clean drinking water, there are no toilets, no resources to buy clean food, and if people have to depend on food left in the garbage, obviously dysentery will spread and take epidemic forms whenever the climatic conditions are adverse. If poor sanitation, poor nutrition and absence of adequate supportive therapy when needed are the central factors for widespread deaths from dysentery, is the government of West Bengal not to be blamed for the present epidemic and is the government of India not to be blamed for the prevalence of this and other such diseases throughout the country?

As a matter of fact the government is well aware of the political implications of deaths due to this and other forms of epidemics. It is well known that many deaths due to cholera are attributed to gastroenteritis because cholera invariably exists in epidemic form. Although death from severe gastroenteritis (in reality diarrhea and dysentery) and cholera are both due to dehydration and the basic therapy is the same, public health officials take pains to attribute such deaths to gastroenteritis rather than cholera, including on such occasions as major Indian religious gatherings.

Alarming Rise in Cesarian Births in Urban Hospitals

DOLORES CHEW

In a report entitled Women and Health, published by the SNTD Women's Research Unit, which covers Women and Childbirth, Women and Contraception, and Women and Domestic Labor, there are alarming statistics concerning the rise in the number of Cæsarian births in urban hospitals, without reasons being properly stated by doctors.

A decade ago the rate was 2%. Now it is 30-35% in many urban hospitals, especially private clinics and the more ritzy trust hospitals in cities like Bombay. This increase was reported in the findings of the Mangudkar Committee appointed in Pune five years ago, which submitted its report in June 1983. The committee found that in some hospitals in Maharashtra, 6 out of 10 babies were being delivered by Cæsarian section.

"We do not have obstetricians any more," says Dr B.N. Purandare, the internationally reputed obstetrician who practices at the Purandare Maternity Home in Bombay, and who was on the Mangudkar Committee. "All we have are money-minded practitioners. And this is the major reason for the increase in Cæsarians. A Cæsarian costs three to five times as much as a normal delivery and there are some doctors who charge as much as Rs 4,000 to Rs 5,000 for a Cæsarian so they make as much on one Cæsarian as they would on ten normal deliveries."

A revealing statistic is the discrepancy in the number of Cæsarian births in private clinics and in public hospitals. The Mangudkar Committee found a Cæsarian incidence of 30% in many private maternity homes but the figure in government hospitals in the state was around 5%. In Bombay's Wadia Hospital, where 10,000 annual deliveries are performed, Cæsarian sections over the past 10 years have stabilized at 7%.

A Bombay doctor comments: "Doctors have nothing to gain monetarily from patients coming into charitable institutions. There is no opportunity to fleece such patients by insisting on a Cæsarian when a labor delivery will do. You therefore find a more ethical situation prevailing in public hospitals."

Also, busy city doctors with crowded practices find Cæsarians more convenient, rather than being in constant attendance on their patient. But patients also contribute to the process. Dr Purandare says, "Cæsarians are fashionable among women of the upper class. It is a status symbol, like having a video set, because it shows that they are affluent enough to be able to afford the expense of a Cæsarian. And there are doctors prepared to cater to this kind of need, too."

"A Cæsarian costs three to five times as much as a normal delivery and there are some doctors who charge as much as Rs 4,000 to Rs 5,000 for a Cæsarian so they make as much on one Cæsarian as they would on ten normal deliveries."

[Editor's Note: An important reason left out by Dr Purandare is that the process of delivery is a painful one. Most women, and doctors, do not know techniques of mitigating or distracting the pain so that the woman can have control over the birth process. Given this situation, it is not surprising that many women are fearful of the whole process and opt for a procedure that, by making them totally unconscious, seems to be less painful. It is only recently that women in the West have begun using the methods of Lamaze and others to gain control over their own bodies while delivering their babies. Until ten years back, it was quite common in the US (even now, it is not rare) for the woman to be anesthetized, slightly or considerably, during labor. It is accepted that such anesthetics do not in fact help, even though they reduce the pain, because they make it harder for the woman to use the contractions to advance the labor. In India, where most women, and men, know little about the process of childbirth (we have so many myths even about menstruation), it is a very scary thing.]

A great deal of the concern over unnecessary Cæsarians arises from the major health risks — both immediate and long-term — that the surgery entails for the mother. Although the mortality rate in Cæsarians is low, between 0.05% and 1%, the morbidity risks are much higher: anesthesia complications leading to hypertension and backaches, severe blood loss and pulmonary embolism — in which the recumbent position of the woman for 24-48 hours after the operation can create blood or air clots in the circulation, leading to lung complications such as pneumonia and sometimes death.

In the long term, there are the very real risks of one-child sterility, hernia, urinary and rectal infection, and intestinal obstruction where a part of the intestine adheres to the scars of the uterus; pelvic infection has been estimated to be around 15 times higher for Cæsarian mothers than for normal delivery mothers.

Health Care—Which Way to Go?

The Voluntary Health Association, which produces the bimonthly journal, Health for the Millions, has produced this book covering health problems.

There is an article on Popular Medicine, one on medicines and the doctor's role in the drug industry. How much does that industry spend on research and how much on promoting its products? How does the doctor influence the choice of medical products? Another of the subjects dealt with is the nurse, her position in public structures, her dependence on the other professionals — mostly men — and the inadequate training she receives.

The theme of the woman-mother is analyzed in "Who is malnourished: mother or the woman?" Expectant mothers, those nursing their infants and children under five are the most exposed to the harmful effects of malnutrition and poor feeding. The Indian woman, between 15 and 45 (that is, during 30 years of her life), becomes pregnant eight times on

the average. This does not lead to a birth in every case. Many times, the child dies before being born, and one of the main reasons is the mother's malnutrition. Infant mortality and mortality of women giving birth are very high. All these ills afflict the poorest classes, which shows it is not just a question of health or special diets, but an eminently socio-economic question.

The book concludes that everything connected with health care and its shortcomings is intimately bound up with one dominant factor: underdevelopment and its consequences.

The book is available from Voluntary Health Association of India C14, Community Center Safdarjung Development Area New Delhi 110 016

(information from publisher)

The Beautiful Tree: New Book by Dharampal

P. RADHAKRISHNAN

[Some time back, we carried a series of articles based on Dharampal's book on Science and Technology in Eighteenth Century India, consisting of material written by foreign travelers and colonial administrators dealing with what they had seen as the achievements of pre-British India. Dharampal has more recently written a book on the education system in India during the 18th century. The 436-page book costs Rs 250 and is published by Biblia Impex. Below is a review, slightly edited, taken from the Indian Express, which expresses a strong disagreement with Dharampal's outlook. We invite readers, who have read the book or who otherwise have views on the subject, to write. Ed.]

Like his earlier works, Dharampal's latest book is also a nostalgic harking back to pre-British Indian society, to the land of milk and honey, to the happy harmony of classes, undifferentiated collective unity, to the glorious land of "village republics."

This time the nostalgia is about indigenous Indian education, and is kindled by Gandhi's 1931 Chatham House speech. In this speech Gandhi had bemoaned the fact the India was then more illiterate than it was 50 or 100 years ago, and blamed the British for this: "The British administrators, when they came to India, instead of taking hold of things as they were, began to root them out. They scratched the soil and began to look at the root, and left the root like that, and the beautiful tree perished."

What Gandhi idealized as the beautiful tree was largely a making of the Hindu culture, and so any British attempt to uproot it would have in effect meant assaulting this tenacious culture. If this were to happen it would not have taken them long to bury down the corpse of Manu without allowing it to stink for so long. Further when the strong British tree struck deep roots in the Indian soil, the intrinsically weak and lopsided native tree was bound to collapse.

What is more, in a hierarchy-infested society, Gandhi's beautiful tree would have been really beautiful only to those ensconced at the top, who alone could have reaped its fruit. But, even to them, the beauty of the tree began to fade soon after the alien tree began to bear fruit, in as much as it was they who first abandoned the former and clambered up the latter. Gandhi, however, stolidly refused to acknowledge these facts.

Not surprisingly, Gandhi was immediately challenged by Sir Philip Hartog, a founder of the school of Oriental and African Studies and a former vice-chancellor of Dacca University. However, despite his best efforts, Gandhi was not able to face this challenge successfully.

It is as though to fill this void that Dharampal has prepared his present book, with about 84 pages of his own writing and 354 pages of related documents reproduced from various sources.

One of Dharampal's main conclusions is that in terms of the nature and content of instruction imparted and the proportion of children who received it, education in India in the early 19th century was in no ways inferior to that imparted in England at the time. But one is tempted to ask whether the indicators used by him are really sufficient to make a meaningful comparison of indigenous Indian education with the "progressive" system that had evolved in England. One is also tempted to ask who benefited from this education.

Dharampal has tried to counter the latter question by attempting to contradict the various pronouncements that education of any sort in India was until recently mostly limited to the upper strata of society, especially the twice-born. He has done this exercise mainly with data

obtained from the survey of indigenous education in Madras Presidency, which was conducted during 1822-1826 at the instance of the Presidency Governor Sir Thomas Munro.

According to this data - available for all but one of the 21 Presidency districts - of the total male-school students (the proportion of female students was negligible) the percentage of students from the Brahmin caste was only 19, from Chetti Rajahs (Kshatriyas?) less than one, from Visayas only nine; whereas the percentage of students from among the Sudras was 50, from other castes 15, and from the Muslims seven.

These figures may tend to give the false impression that the upper strata of society, especially the Brahmins, did not dominate the educational system. But the information supplied by the district collectors had a number of weaknesses. Apart from being incomplete and incoherent in some cases, [the total number is quite small as] there not much data on the home or private education of a large number of students. Also, a large number of caste groups, which were high in the caste-hierarchy, were subsumed under the Varna-based British category of Soodras. The number of students from each was also not related to the population of the respective castes.

This becomes very important in view of the fact that the twice-born, together with the high status castes subsumed under the Sudra category, formed only a small proportion of the total Presidency population. Further, there were wide variations from district to district in the nature and content of instruction imparted to the children of the various groups, and the children from the upper castes had the best instruction available then.

All these factors make it clear that the upper strata of society, especially the Brahmins, did dominate the system of indigenous education. This dominance becomes all the more clear from the data on higher learning presented in the book itself, which shows that students from the upper castes, especially the Brahmins, had not only preponderance over others but also cornered all the benefits of the best type of higher learning.

Dharampal has argued that the uprooting of Indian education destroyed the Indian social balance "in which, traditionally, persons from all sections of society appear to have been able to receive an optimum schooling which, amongst other, had enabled them to participate openly and appropriately and with dignity not only in the social and cultural life of their locality, but if they wished, ensured participation at the more extended levels." However, he has not explained what was optimum schooling, or open and appropriate participation with dignity.

He has further argued that it is the destruction of indigenous education along with similar damage in the economic sphere that led to great deterioration in the status and socio-economic conditions and personal dignity of those who are now known as the scheduled castes, and to only a slightly lesser extent to that of the vast peasant majority encompassed by the term "backward castes." In this context it is relevant to mention that social inequalities and untouchability did not have to be imported by the British, but were inherent in the pre-colonial Indian social system.

Even during British rule, groups like the "untouchables" were not allowed to participate along with caste Hindus in the educational system. And paradoxically enough, it was during the exploitative British rule that special provisions were for the first time made for the education (and employment) of Muslims, scheduled tribes and castes, and an administrative category of "backward classes" devised

(continued on page 23)

Book Review: Birsa Munda and His Movement 1874-1901

Mahasveta Devi

Dr. KS Singh's book is a substantially revised new edition book "Dust Storm and Hanging Mist: Story of Birsa Munda and His Movement." The new book, as the earlier one, is the most comprehensive one on a great tribal hero and his anti-British movement for his people, the Mundas of Chotanagpur.

Son of a small peasant, Birsa Munda, became a rebel, preached a new religion and ultimately emerged as a people's leader leading a militant movement which remains significant till date. KS Singh's shows logically that the tribal belts and regions of Chotanagpur, Santal Parganas, Palamau, Ranchi and Singhbhum had been in unrest after the great Santal rebellion of 1855-56 and movement in one form or another had continued. Tribal life, agrarian system and identity were under threat of destruction from the joint inroads made by the British, the zamindars, money-lenders, coolie-recruiting thikdars (contractors). A tribal had to pay extortion money to the zamindars under a thousand pretexts. His very existence was threatened. Birsa's movement was the last great one and his name remains, till date, a source of inspiration to his tribal brethren. The movement had been political from the very beginning and the famines of 1896-97 and 1899-1900 helped the last phase. The last fight was on Dombari Hill in January 1900. By February, Birsa was arrested and the rebels were ultimately imprisoned. Birsa died under mysterious circumstances in Ranchi jail in June 1900. The Mundari trials continued till December. Out of 482 accused in Ranchi Singhbhum, 98 were convicted, 68 bound to keep peace, 296 acquitted, discharged or pardoned. Three were sentenced to death.

In terms of immediate achievement, the movement might seem to have gained little but the subsequent happenings prove that Birsa movement was taken very seriously by the government and tribals sought inspiration from him for the various subsequent movements. The Tenancy Amendment Act of 1903 recognized the Mundari Khuntkatti land system for the first time. The Chotanagpur Tenancy

Act of 1908 followed. A number of administrative measures were instituted to bring the people and the administration closer. More important was the awakening of the tribals to the truth that they had to fight for their rights. Birsa's religion did not induce him to give up the path of violence. The Oraons of Palamau and Ranchi embraced Birsait religion. The Tana Bhagat movement of the Oraons was probably influenced by Birsa's movement. A Bhagat song begins like this, "O Birsa Bhagwan, you revealed the Tana Religion!" Duka Ho's Haribaba Movement (1930-31) in Ranchi and Singhbhum was aimed at against the cult of Bonga-worship practiced by the tribalists. The political movement, one centering on tribal ethnicity and the other on the nationalist ideal, based themselves on Birsa and his movement. They started with the formation of the Chotanagpur Improvement Society in 1916 which had its objectives, reservation of seats in services and legislative body and the creation of a separate substate for Chotanagpur. In 1938, this body merged with the Adivasi Mahasabha which launched a militant movement, using tribal cultural symbols, for the formation of a separate state. They adopted Birsa as the symbol of the Adivasi "risorgimento" Jaipal Singh, the president of the Mahasabha, was warned by the authorities to be careful about using Birsa's name and reviving "hero-worship" centring on Birsa. The main gate of the Ramgarh Congress was named after Birsa and his life-story written and displayed. The Congress movement in Chotanagpur developed its base among the tribals and backward classes emphasizing the character of the Birsa movement as an anti-British struggle.

Today, Birsa's name is deep-rooted in the tribal entity and KS Singh's book should be read by everyone interested in the tribals. KS Singh is also instrumental in initiating Birsa Mela at Chalkad, Birsa's village. The book, beautifully written, is very exhaustive. It is an inspired treatise and also inspiring.

from Frontier

Indian Womanhood Then and Now

This 310-page book, edited by Dr Jessie B. Tellis-Nayak, aims at creating an awareness of the situation of women and girls in India. The first part traces herstory then and now. The second part treats some problems of purdah, dowry, wife-beating and others peculiar to her sex.

The third part describes and analyzes some efforts made by women to improve themselves economically and socially. The fourth part presents profiles of women, great and small, who have struggled and overcome difficulties to achieve their goals.

Finally in the fifth part, a few selected cartoons, poems and songs are included that give women's voice to new ideas, feelings and visions.

Written in a lucid style, the book will be a ready reference for persons working with women and girls.

Dr Tellis-Nayak studied social work at the Catholic University in Washington, DC. She joined the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, as assistant director of the Chotanagpur Project in Ranchi. She started the ISI Program for Women's Development.

The book is available from Satprakashan Sanchar Kendra, Indore M.P. 452 001 India

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Forthcoming Issues in Volume IV will focus on The Origins and Development of Political Movements in Colonial and Independent India (Spring 1984) and The Political Economy of Bangladesh (Fall 1984).

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Indira: The Main Threat to India's Unity

Once again the Gandhi government has done the unthinkable. Over the past two years, when there were many opportunities to take political steps to negotiate a settlement on Punjab, Gandhi government and Indira Congress at almost every occasion, created situations and circumstances which sabotaged the negotiations. Whether these negotiations were between the Akalis and other opposition parties, between the Akalis, opposition parties and the government, as well as between the Akalis and the government. Instead, Gandhi deliberately appeared to avoid solving the crisis through discussions with the moderate Sikh leaders and played divide and rule tactics with the expectation, perhaps, of extracting maximum electoral advantage from the predictable Hindu backlash. When the Sikh extremists' activities became unmanageable, Punjab was sealed off from the rest of the country, life there was brought to a standstill and army given charge of the situation.

Gandhi has been hoping that the attack on the Golden Temple in which over a thousand people are reportedly killed, will once again present her to the rest of India as a firm and strong leader who can handle crisis situations. The ruling circles once again have been able to muster support for their divisive and dangerous policies which can only lead to the disintegration of the country; it appears that most of the national opposition which is primarily based in northern India, especially the Hindi-speaking belt, has come out in support of the government's actions.

Gandhi's action has also done great damage to the Indian polity. An irreparable wedge has been created between the Sikhs and non-Sikhs in Punjab which will take considerable effort and understanding for correction. Unlike in the past when both Hindus and Sikhs lived and worked together, went to each other's religious places, and intermarried, the two communities will remain suspicious of each other's motives in future unless sincere and honest attempts are made by both side to deal with misunderstandings. Communal harmony which was partly disturbed as a result of extremist terror will be shattered if non-Sikhs there side with the government. There have been reports of rejoicing and relief by non-Sikhs in rest of India (in Delhi, some Hindus were reported distributing sweets). If this attitude persists, Sikhs are bound to feel alienated in India, and they cannot be blamed if the demands for separation and secession are raised as has happened in the North-eastern part of India. Khushwant Singh, a Gandhi crony for many years, who has been extremely critical of the Akali leadership throughout the whole agitation, aptly said that Gandhi's actions had made martyrs out of thugs. The idea of Khalistan which drew support from a handful and was denounced time and again by the Akali leadership including the extremists, may be a solace to many Sikhs now because of Gandhi's actions.

Last year, Gandhi government messed up Assam. As a result of which, over

(continued on page 11)

Indira's Action in Punjab Must be Denounced in No Uncertain Terms

The Gandhi government's action on June 4 ordering the Indian army to storm the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) in Amritsar, in which according to some official sources, at least a thousand people (actual number seems to be much higher) have been killed, cannot be condoned. Instead, it deserves an unequivocal and outright denunciation by all democratic, patriotic, secular and religious forces - Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, and others alike. This action is yet another example of how the ruling circles in New Delhi have over the past years, dealt with the aspirations and demands of the minorities, religious, linguistic, national, lower castes, and tribals. Once again issues which needed a political solution and for which there was an ample opportunity for a negotiated settlement over a period of two years, were dismissed and ignored. The government instead dragged on; at many occasions when settlement was almost in sight, circumstances and situations were created by the government and Congress(I) which resulted in sabotaging the negotiations and undercutting those negotiating. Now, the government finally resorted to brutal force.

Earlier, mostly people from the periphery of India (Nagaland, Mizoram, As-

sam, etc.) who never felt completely integrated into the Indian society bore the brunt of center's callous and arrogant policies. Now, a community situated in the heartland, at the doorstep of New Delhi, well integrated and assimilated into the Indian milieu and which is spread all over India, is the target.

On no grounds can the killing of over a thousand people inside the Golden Temple over a period of two days, and a military action at such a large scale involving 6 army battalions with the active support of paramilitary forces be justified, leaving aside the question of whether the government gave any due consideration to the religious sentiments of Sikhs before attacking the holiest shrine of Sikh religion and all other major gurdwaras in Punjab.

First, the Gandhi government justified her actions by saying that such a drastic measure had to be undertaken because of extremists escalating their violent activities in the last two weeks of May killing over 100 people. According to some military sources, however, the army raid was being planned for over a month. This was despite the fact that few days before the

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Sikhs All over the World Enraged

Sikhs living abroad have unequivocally and heatedly denounced government's actions. There have been many protest demonstrations in London, Germany, Hong Kong, Singapore, New York, Washington D.C., Chicago, Vancouver, Toronto, San Francisco, and other cities in the world. Sikhs have reported to be extremely hurt and angry over the events; even those who used to be critical of the Akali movement and supporters of Gandhi have denounced government's action. In New York, over 2500 staged a protest rally. London and Vancouver witnessed the largest demonstrations ever organized by Sikhs in each of which over 20,000 people participated wearing black bands, shouting angry slogans against Gandhi government and burning Indian flag, Indian constitution, and Gandhi's and Zail Singh's effigies. Many also carried placards and shouted slogans in favor of Khalistan.

Leaders of the Sikh community in North America have condemned the storming of the Golden Temple and killing of so many people. According to one, "India has a facade democracy. If each minority cannot breathe freely, it is a tyranny of the majority." The President of Sikh Cultural Society Tejinder Singh Kahlon called the attack on the Golden Temple "outrageous and immoral." Kahlon who

Ahluwalia said, "In a civilized world, no one can condone the desecration of a temple, especially in a democratic and a secular country. It is unprecedented that a military action against a religious place has taken place." According to Gurnam Singh Pamma, a Yuba-city based leader of the Sikh Council of North America, "they should have arrested Bhindranwale. Treated him the way they wanted to. But instead, they waged a war. And, we can't tolerate that."

A poll of British Sikhs taken on June 7 and 8 showed that 72% said that before the storming of the Golden Temple they had favored a negotiated settlement while 28% said that they had favored military action on the part of the Sikhs. The assault on the temple still left 65% in favor of negotiations, while the proportion favoring military action by Sikhs rose to 35%.

According to one Hindu whose family has been living in Punjab for many generations, "As a result of Gandhi's actions, Punjab will never be the same. The two communities who lived together in harmony for hundreds of years will remain suspicious of each other's motives in future." He observed that so far, Punjab



was a supporter of Gandhi and arranged her visit to the Richmond Hill gurdwara in New York during Gandhi's trip to the US in 1982, despite many protests, added, "moderates have been pushed to the wall." He said that before the attack, moderates did not favor a separate state but that now "they have no choice." According to Kahlon, "Gandhi has now laid the foundation for a separate Sikh state."

Another supporter of Gandhi and the president of the Overseas Indira Congress of North America, Dr. Daljit Singh

had not seen any major communal riots between Hindus and Sikhs despite the violence perpetrated by the extremists for over two years. He expressed the fear that the government's actions now may lead to the two communities clashing and rioting against each other. He hoped that the two communities, especially the Hindus, would continue to show restraint and understanding in the crisis situation.

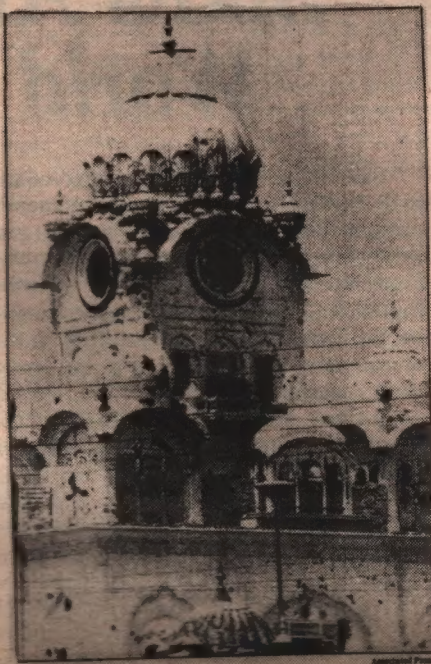
Army Action Planned for Over a Month Foreign Bogey Raised

Before Punjab was brought under the army control and martial law imposed there, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi addressed the nation on Saturday June 2 in which she warned, "Make no mistake about it. No government can allow violence and terrorism at any premium in the settlement of issues." However, Gandhi gave no hint that she had ordered the troops to move into religious institutions in a mop-up operation. A report in The New York Times dated June 4 from New Delhi quoted a government spokesman saying "If we come to know that extremists are inside any place of worship and the only way left is to get them out, we will give them due notice." He also added that "perhaps no notice had been given so far." gurdwaras were attacked by the army throughout the state the next day. According to one army officer who was quoted in the New York Times, the decision to use the army was made more than a month ago.

According to the Union Home Secretary, the army had to be asked to enter the Harimandir Sahib because of escalation in extremist attacks in the last two weeks in May in which over 100 people had reportedly been killed. The Secretary also added that the army used a great deal of restraint and made sure that minimal damage was caused to places of worship as a result of which it suffered many more casualties.

As we go to press, Indira Gandhi has started charging that the foreign powers were actively supporting the extremists. To support their charge, the government pointed to arms and ammunition found in the Harimandir Sahib some of which, according to government sources, had Chi-

nese and Pakistani markings and most of which were smuggled from Pakistan. According to a military briefing, two Pakistani nationals were inside the Golden Temple when it was attacked; they were reported to have been killed during the raid; the army claimed that many Pakistani passports were found inside the temple. One Indian government intelligence official was quoted by the Cable News Network as saying that the



Demo at entrance to Golden Temple in Amritsar, India, was packed by small arms fire and shelling in attack on the Sikh shrine.

CIA was behind the extremists. According to a Home Ministry spokesman on June 13, if the army had not attacked the Golden Temple, there would have been an armed insurgency for a separate Sikh

state in Punjab with the active support of foreign countries, and that Punjab would have "ceased to exist." This charge was repeated by President Zail Singh, himself a Sikh, the next day. He had reportedly threatened to resign after a visit to Harimandir Sahib 3 days after the army assault and had subsequently cancelled all his public engagements. The Press Trust of India quoted Singh saying on June 14 that "the incidents are a result of a deep-rooted conspiracy between some foreign forces inimical to India and certain misguided and anti-national elements within the country."

Both Pakistani government and the US Embassy in Delhi have denied the charges and called them absurd.

The government has recently also reported that it has found large amounts of opium and heroin which according to government sources, were being smuggled by extremists from Pakistan to buy arms.

Over the last two years, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, other government functionaries and Congress(I) leaders have made repeated charges of foreign involvement in creating trouble in Punjab and other parts of India, challenged by the press and opposition at every occasion to produce evidence the government has refused on the grounds of national security. There is considerable skepticism about these charges. The media and the opposition feel that the government's charge of foreign involvement is yet another way to cover up the colossal failure of its policies in Punjab.

Punjab Sealed off from Rest of India and World

Before the raids on gurdwaras, the Indian government completely sealed Punjab off from the rest of India and the world. All means of transportation, even bullock carts and bicycles, were banned. Round the clock curfew was imposed in Punjab with shoot-at-sight orders. Curfew has been lifted for few hours in many towns 10 days after the attack. There have even been reports of death due to starvation as a result of total curfew. All

A two-month ban on reporting, transmission and publication of news within the state on the terrorist campaign and the Akali agitation in general was imposed, which meant that nothing could be written or reported on the army attack, resistance and response of the community and other matters.

telephone and telegraph connections were cut; foreign journalists as well as Indian reporters working for foreign media were transported out of the state, and no one out of the state has been allowed into it. A two-month ban on reporting, transmission and publication of news within the state on terrorist campaign and the Akali agitation in general was imposed, which meant that nothing could be written or reported on the army attack, resistance and response of the community and other matters. Most newspapers in Punjab stopped their publication as a result of the government ban. The government revoked curfew passes issued to reporters which were not renewed. All the news about Punjab and the attack on the Harimandir Sahib are so far based on the briefings by the government; there is no independent sources of reports or means of verification available to anyone yet. When foreign reporters were taken on a government arranged tour of the Harimandir Sahib on June 14, they were flown into Amritsar and taken to an army site for a briefing and then to the Golden Temple; they were not allowed to talk to any civilians. No photographs were allowed either. The government run TV station however did carry pictures of the shrine in the center of the Harimandir Sahib complex.



Indian troops taking up positions June 2 near the Golden Temple complex.

Situation Prior to Army Attack

The situation in Punjab had been deteriorating over the last few months with reports of violence in Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Ferozpur and other cities. In the last week of May, over 40 people were killed by Sikh extremists and in police firings while 22 people were killed in the last two days. There were clashes between the paramilitary forces which had cordoned off the Harimandir Sahib and the extremists who fired from the rooftops of the gurdwara. In one incident, the police was reportedly following two Sikhs carrying machine guns; when it got outside the temple complex, there were showers of gun shots from many sides of the temple roof. Twenty people were killed in these clashes which lasted for over 7 hours. According to the management of the Golden Temple Gurdwara, most of the victims were pilgrims visiting the gurdwara who were caught in the exchange of shots between the police and Sikh extremists.

Earlier an ex-Jathedar of the Akal Takhat, Giani Pratap Singh, 85, was shot dead by Sikh extremists at his residence in Amritsar. Giani Pratap Singh had spoken against the misuse of gurdwaras as sanctuaries for criminals. The extremists had also killed Romesh Chandra, the editor of Punjab Kesari and son of Lala



Ramesh Chandra:

Jagat Narayan who was himself gunned down by extremists in 1981; Romesh Chandra had written an editorial express-

ing anguish and anger at Pratap Singh's murder. These murders had tremendously outraged the Hindu and Sikh communities.

Angered by Pratap Singh's murder, Akali leader Jiwan Singh Umrangal appealed to the head priests of the Akal Takhat to intervene to stop the killings. He also asked responsible members of the community to raise their voice against the "sinful happenings inside the Golden Temple complex." Umrangal had even threatened to commit self-immolation if his appeal did not produce any atonement within a month. Bhindranwale however had spurned the appeal of the high priests headed by the Akal Takhat Jathedar Kirpal Singh on avoiding any bloodshed or violence in the Golden Temple as "meaningless," when he was approached by the high priests in an attempt to bring truce between him and Longowal.

Earlier a leader of the Janata Party Om Prakash Bagga was gunned down by three men on a scooter. In all over 250 people have died since February in extremist attacks and police firings. There had also been increasing number of reports of arson, looting and blackmail in Amritsar, Jullundur and other towns where anti-social elements taking advantage of the chaotic situation had been having hay days.

Akali Dal President Harchand Singh Longowal called on May 23 for a stepping up of the Akali agitation by launching another civil disobedience drive in June. Longowal asked his followers to stop foodgrains to other states.

Retired Brigadier Arrested

V. KUMAR

The New York Times of June 16 reported the Indian government's announcement of the arrest of retired Brigadier Maninder Singh in Amritsar. According to the Times, the government claimed that Brig. Singh had been arrested on charges of "training subversives" in military tactics. According to Brig. Maninder Singh's relatives who live in Flushing, New York, and were interviewed by this correspondent, this charge is "ridiculous." In a telephone conversation they had with him over a month ago, Brig. Singh had opposed the actions of Bhindranwale and other extremists. They said he was a supporter of the mainstream Akali party groups.

It appears that the government, in an attempt to manufacture reasons to support its action, may now be starting to arrest prominent Sikhs, particularly ex-military officers politically opposed to it, on false charges. This dangerous move can only serve to further embitter the minority community and drive another wedge into the already cracked edifice of national unity.

Punjab Farmers Refuse to Sell Grain to FCI

Earlier in an unrelated event, there was a boycott of foodgrain sale to the Food Corporation of India organized by a farmers' organization in Punjab for a week. Boycott was to press for higher procurement prices for foodgrains and lower prices for agricultural inputs. According to many news accounts, both Hindu and Sikh farmers participated in the boycott together despite tense situation that has existed in the state for the last year or so and which has taken the Hindu and Sikh communities wide apart.



Chronology of Events in Punjab

While most of the Indian states were being reorganized on linguistic basis, Akali Dal raised the demand for formation of Punjabi Suba on the linguistic basis. But Congress government did not allow it and made Punjab a bilingual state. This was done under the pressure of communal Punjabi Hindus who opposed Punjabi Suba and disowned their mother tongue in the census of 1951. By disowning the Punjabi language they made it the language of Sikhs and communalized the very issue of language. This was later used by the Sikh communalists to equate Punjabi culture to Sikh culture. The attempt of Congress was to accommodate communalist of both the variety and it worked out a regional formula in 1956. Under this formula, PEPSU was merged with Punjab and the single state was divided into two regions—Punjabi and Hindi regions. In the immediate situation, this was accepted by the Akali Dal. As a consequence of this many Akali stalwarts joined Congress Party and Akali Dal did not contest 1957 elections. A section of Congress party continued to dabble in Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) affairs. But after the success in SGPC elections, Akali Dal again launched Punjabi Suba agitations in 1959 and 1961. Against this, Punjabi Hindus launched Hindi agitation led by Jan Sangh, RSS, Arya Samaj and indirectly a section of Congress and advocated "Maha-Punjab."

In this process, atmosphere of Punjab and issue of Punjabi national aspirations were communalized and communal elements in both the community became very vocal. It is at this stage that a split in the Akali party took place after the elections in 1962 and faction led by Sant Fateh Singh representing the peasantry emerged to be powerful. Under his leadership, the Akali party raised the demand for Punjabi Suba with no communal overtones, and won the support of secular Punjabi Hindus and several opposition parties and ultimately was able to achieve a success in the formation of Punjabi Suba in 1966. Once again, there was opposition from Jan Sangh, RSS, Arya Samaj and sections of Congress. Congress party under pressure of communal Punjabi Hindus committed a great crime in the process of creation of Punjabi Suba. In creation of Punjabi Suba, it created a Sikh dominated Suba. Non-Sikh Punjabi speaking areas were deliberately kept out of Punjab. Capital of Punjab, Chandigarh, was declared as an Union Territory.

After formation of Punjabi Suba, in 1967 election, a non-Congress united front ministry led by Akali Dal was formed. Besides Akali Dal, this included the CPI and Jan Sangh and enjoyed the support of CPM. Congress party became the main opposition party in the Punjab legislative assembly. But the ministry was toppled by Lachhman Singh Gill-led group of MLAs from Akali Dal with the active support of Congress party. Congress party extended open support to the Gill ministry for a while and it fell down when Congress withdrew its support. This ministry had in it Jagjit Singh Chouhan as Finance Minister (who later on became President of the National Council of Khalistan). Elections to the Punjab assembly were held again in which Akali Dal and Jana Sangh entered into electoral alliance and won majority and again ministry was formed led by Akali Dal. Jana Sangh later on walked out of it on the issue of Guru Nanak Dev University. The Akali Ministry continued for a while and ultimately was not allowed to complete its term. In 1972 under the President's rule in Punjab, elections were held and Congress won the majority and formed its ministry. Thus from 1967 to 1971, Akali Dal was in power in one form or the other and could do so with the support of Jana Sangh. This period saw relative secularization of politics at the formal level and slogan raised was also about Hindu Sikh unity. ..

Role of the Akali Dal

Dominant leadership of the Akali Dal comes out of capitalist farmers. It has its main sway among the different layers of the peasantry. Its cadres comes mainly from different sections of the peasantry. Its mobilizing capacity is also based on peasantry and sections around them (educated unemployed—according to a government survey, there are over 50,000 graduates unemployed in Punjab). During the period of its rule, 1967-71 and 1977-80, Akali party expanded its base among the peasantry. With modernization of agriculture, expansion of education and with experience to rule, Akali party has produced a mature leadership from among upper layers of peasantry. This leadership is interested in mobilization of the entire peasantry in particular and Sikhs in general. For this purpose, it

vocal and communal in their utterings in the present and in some cases, even excel RSS. Many prominent Congress leaders have also RSS background. In the present situation, Congress(I) has been successful in organizing Punjabi Hindus along communal lines under its hegemony. The traditional communal Hindu party Jana Sangh and its new form BJP have lagged far behind Congress(I) because of their reluctance to oppose Akali Dal openly. BJP elements in the past shared power with Akali Dal in Punjab and intends to do so in future also. This has acted as a constraint on its open communal role during the present crisis.

On the Sikh front, Congress(I) has its influence over a section of Sikh peasantry which historically came in Congress fold or some of them who could not be accommodated by Akali Dal joined Congress

Akali led government in Punjab, Congress openly supported in SGPC elections Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. It also helped the creation of Dal Khalsa. Its dual policy of supporting Sikh religious fundamentalists on one hand and Nirankaris on the other created Sikh-Nirankari bloody clash at Amritsar in 1978 which has played the key role in creation of the present crisis. The policy of supporting and encouraging Sikh fundamentalists pays Congress(I) in another way also. It increase the influence of Congress supported fundamentalists at the cost of the Akali Dal. The later reacts by adopting religious fundamentalism and alienates it more from the urban Hindu traders and its capacity of alliance with BJP. In the present context, this also a tool of factional fights within Congress(I).

PRESENT CRISIS

The present crisis started after coming to power of Congress(I) in 1980. In the light of Sikh-Nirankari clash in 1978 and after the murder of Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh at Delhi, a number of murders of Nirankaris and Hindus took place in Punjab. A large number of these murders remained untraced. The blame for these murders was placed by the government on Bhindranwale and Sikh extremists and press also created the same impression. Bhindranwale was arrested in the murder case of Lala Jagat Narain, but the way he was arrested, interrogated and later on released by the government made him a hero and exposed the unseriousness of the government. Bhindranwale became more bold and issued militant statements indirectly lauding these murders. Organizations such as Dal Khalsa, Akhand Kirtani Jatha and National Council of Khalistan became more active. Most of these organizations operated from within the Golden Temple complex at Amritsar (it became evident later on). As two confidants of Bhindranwale were arrested, he came to the Golden Temple and declared Dharam Yudh morcha for their release.

After a few days this was adopted by Akali Dal as a whole and linked with acceptance of the Anandpur Sahib resolution. The morcha became a mass movement and the government did not have a place to keep arrested Akali volunteers. On Gandhi's intervention, all the Akali volunteers were released unconditionally. Several rounds of talks took place between Union Home Minister led team and the Akali delegation without any results. But Akali Dal continued courting daily arrests of Jatha along with various mass actions. A number of Akali workers were killed during the various phases of the Morcha and some of the alleged extremists were also killed by the police in fake encounters. This was condemned mainly by the Akali Dal while the Hindu communal organizations did not condemn it. Indeed the hawks among them justified police actions and demanded even more stringent police, para-military and military measures. However murders of Nirankaris and Hindus were condemned by Hindu leaders vocally who generally agreed with the government's view of blaming Sikh extremists. In this situation some Hindu passengers were separated from other passengers in a night bus and killed near Dhilwan in Kapurthala district. This incident resulted in the fall of government led by Darbara Singh and Punjab was placed under President's rule. Along with it, Punjab and Chandigarh area was declared disturbed area and Armed Forces Act was enforced. This incident was condemned by all sections and Akali Dal supported a call of one day protest Punjab bandh.

In Yamunanagar (Haryana) this provoked attack against Sikhs by communal Hindus generally led by Congress(I) workers. After the declaration of the President's rule, Dhilwan incident was repeated near Taran Taran in Amritsar district. The situation continues with growing psychological differences (continued on page 10)

Demands of the Akali Agitation

The Akali Dal put forth over 40 demands when it started its agitation in Punjab in August 1982. Most of these demands were based on a resolution adopted at Anandpur Sahib during a meeting of the Akali Dal in 1973. The main demands put forth are categorized below:

I. General Demands

Most of the demands in this category are concerned with the center-state relations and are similar to the demands raised by CPM in West Bengal, the Janata Party in Karnataka, and regional parties including Telugu Desam, DMK, AIDMK, the National Conference. They were partly in response to greater centralization of power at the center during Gandhi's rule. These demands called for greater autonomy for the states and decentralization of power. The Akali Dal also demanded that the central government only have control over foreign affairs, defense, currency and communications.

II. Specific Demands

1. Political Demands: (i) Abolition of the Article 25 of the Constitution in which Sikhs are not recognized as a separate religious entity and instead are made to appear as a sect of the Hindu religion, (ii) A personal law and code for Sikhs, (iii) Chandigarh to be the exclusive capital of Punjab, (iv) Adjustment of the

boundaries of Punjab to include Punjabi speaking areas bordering Punjab into Punjab, (v) Restore to Punjab control of the irrigation headworks on the Ravi and Beas rivers and the distribution of river waters "on universally accepted norms and principles."

2. Economic Demands: (i) Better prices for agricultural produce, (ii) Lower prices and subsidies for agricultural inputs to offset a marked increase in their prices, (iii) Government loans and grants to farmers on more favorable conditions, and (iv) Freedom to export grain and agricultural produce to other states and the rest of the world, and (v) Increase in investments in the industry.

3. Religious Demands: (i) End government interference in the management of Sikh gurdwaras, and an enactment of an All-India-Gurdwara Act, (ii) Declare the city of Amritsar a holy city; a total ban on tobacco and liquor in the vicinity of the Golden Temple, and (iii) Install a transmitter to relay recitations of prayers from the Hariminder Sahib.

3. Others: (i) Punjabi be given the status of second language in the neighboring states, (ii) The present ratio of Sikhs in the Army to be maintained.

makes use of Sikh religion. Slogan is raised that Sikh religion and politics are inseparable. Control of the Akali Dal over SGPC and infrastructure of Gurdwaras has proven helpful. Akali Dal makes use of Sikh religious places for propagation of their politics. Political agitations are given the name of 'Dharam Yudh' and panthic unity appeals are issued.

Role of Congress Party

Congress party contends with Akali Dal for power and is its only alternative in the present Punjab. It is active in establishing its hegemony over urban Hindu traders and competes here with BJP. Many communal Hindu urban organizations have Congressman as their active members. At present Congress(I) members are not only active in Hindu Suraksha Samitis, Arya Pritinidhi Sabha, Sanatam Dharam Sabha and many mandir committees and Hindu Sangathanas but also has decisive say in them. Congress(I) played an active role in mobilizing the Hindi Suraksha Samiti based at Patiala which has generated communal tensions. During 1982 and 1983, a large number of shops were burnt. In the Hindu dominated areas Sikh shops were the target and in the Sikh dominated areas, Hindu shops were the target. The town witnessed the worst damage due to the Hindu-Bhapa (Sikh traders) clash. Interestingly both the groups had the blessings of Congress(I). These organizations are more

in the past. Many prominent Congress(I) leaders of today were in the Akali Dal in the past. Some of them have been and some remain blatant communal Sikhs. They do not hesitate in using Gurdwaras and Sikh religion to promote their politics. This trend got a fillip during 1972-77 period when Giani Zail Singh was the chief minister. His politics was not only to appease the Sikhs but to use Sikh religion to promote Congress politics. He organized religious marches and named several institutions after the names of Gurus and rishis....

Second aspect of Congress politics has been to engineer splits in Akali Dal. In these splits, it has been backing Akali extremists, many of them later join Congress. The purpose is to strike at the strength of moderate Akali-leaders who pose a threat in the parliamentary politics. From 1967 onwards, this has been the policy of Congress in Punjab. Earlier it did so through Lachhman Singh Gill and brought down the Akali led coalition in Punjab. After 1971, it got Gurnam Singh group separated from Akali Dal and also caused split in Akali Dal in 1980. This task has been relatively easy because Akali Dal always has several factions and factional leaders. When Congress failed to find out a faction from within the Akali Dal, it creates pressure from outside. Congress intervention in Delhi Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (DGPC) is an open secret. During 1977-80 period of

Punjab Problem: Its Historical Roots Government's Role During Talks

Ever since the Akali agitation has been launched, the government has never seriously tried to negotiate with the Akali leadership despite their repeated calls for the negotiations. At various junctures, only when the situation got out of hand, the negotiations were started. Indira Gandhi and other government leaders tried to dismiss the agitation many times by calling it "foreign inspired," for "Khalistan," and without having "any support." When these accusations did not work, the government would give contradictory signals, for negotiations and settlements, different functionaries emphasizing t aspects. In later part of 1982, Swaran Singh and others were acting as government emissaries and mediating with Akali leadership but they will invariably be undercut by contradictory statements of Indira Gandhi, PC Sethi, Rajiv Gandhi and others. As a result, they gave up.

At numerous occasions, Sethi made statements to the effect that many Akali demands, such as river water dispute, the question of Chandigarh, were acceptable to the government soon to be contradicted by Sethi himself or Gandhi or some one else. Firstly positive statements will not be made directly to the Akali leadership or communicated to them, instead they were turn out to be meant for public re-

When moderates were clearly in command, Gandhi did not negotiate and instead, through her policies, encouraged extremists to erode the base of the moderates.

lations only. Secondly, they will be made to This was most recently reflected when Sethi agreed to have the article 25 in the constitution about the status of Sikhism to be referred to a tribunal for a possible amendment as desired by the Akali Dal; as soon as Longowal issued a statement welcoming government's move, contradictory clarifications or denials were issued. When Gandhi accepted religious demands of the Akalis, she went to a gurdwara in New Delhi controlled by the opponents of the Akali Dal to make that announcement.

A CPM leader and MP Harkishan Singh Surjeet who is considered close to the Akali leadership, evolved a formula after numerous consultations with both Akali leadership and the central government. Many newspapers and journalists had reported that a breakthrough was in sight, only to be completely washed away by government actions.

As recently as in February when tripartite negotiations were reported to have made substantial progress following a peaceful general strike by the Akalis on

Feb. 8, Congress(I) Chief Minister Bhajan Lal's cronies and goons attacked Sikh gurdwaras and shops, burning many of them. This resulted in Sikh extremists in Punjab going on a rampage which once again, gave the government an opportunity to sabotage the negotiations. Despite Bhindranwale's communal tirade and murder spree by Dashmesh Regiment, Rajiv Gandhi was reported to have refused to criticize Bhindranwale because according to Gandhi, Bhindranwale had a considerable following in the community.

In May, Indira Gandhi gave two reasons for not resuming negotiations with the Akalis: (i) their demands keep changing, so the government does not know what to negotiate about, and (ii) no one seems incharge so it is not clear who to negotiate with. To anyone familiar with Punjab, same over the last two years; last year Longowal even issued a pamphlet listing all the demands and Akali positions. Only the emphasis on various demands have changed. As for the second reason, when moderates were clearly in command, Gandhi did not negotiate and instead, through her policies, encouraged extremists to erode the base of the moderates.

Indian Army Storms into Hariminder Sahib

(continued from page 1)

Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, his key aides, Bhai Amrik Singh, the founder of All India Sikh Federation, a student group which was banned by the government few months ago, and a retired major-general Shuhbeg Singh who was allegedly giving military training to the extremists. According to a government spokesperson, their bodies were found in a basement near the Akal Takhat, one of the most religious places inside Harimandir Sahib. The manner of Bhindranwale's death posed several unanswered questions. Military sources claimed that he was gunned down at close range in a battle with army troops; other government sources hinted that he had been shot by other Sikh extremists. The multiple gunshot wounds on his body have not been satisfactorily explained. According to foreign reporters who were taken on a pre-arranged tour by the government 10 days after the attack, most of the Akal Takhat complex is destroyed; two minarets and water tanks were also destroyed by army cannon before it moved into the Golden Temple complex. The main shrine in the center of the complex was reported to be intact.

Six battalions of the army were used in the operation on gurdwaras. The army used tanks in the attack on the Harimandir Sahib; an armored carrier was also taken inside the temple. The army met considerable resistance from the extremists who fired back with machineguns, anti-tank missiles, and other weapons.

Just before the army attacked the temple, Akali Dal President Sant Harchand Singh Longowal and Gurcharan Singh Tohra, chairman of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), who were also living inside the Golden Temple, either surrendered to the army as claimed by the government or were captured. Both are detained in Rajasthan. Later, the authorities also arrested two other Akali leaders Prakash Singh Badal, former Chief Minister of Punjab, and Surjit Singh Barnala, former Union Agriculture Minister, who were not living inside the gurdwara. Badal and Barnala had called upon Sikhs to observe June 17 as "Ardas Divas" (prayer day) in memory of those killed in the Golden Temple. They called upon Sikhs to return medals and honors received from the government.

The Golden Temple has not been open to the public yet. A group of 43 intellectuals in New Delhi appealed to the government on June 14 for the withdrawal of the army from the gurdwara complex, for the release of moderate Sikh leaders and for the creation of a fund to support and compensate the families of those killed.



Bazaar near Golden Temple in Amritsar was heavily damaged in battle between Sikhs and Indian Army troops.

tion taking a religious tone. Non-Sikhs also bear responsibility for historically shying away from supporting demands for the interest of whole Punjab, Punjabi language and culture, put forth by the Akalis. The government's role was highly communal; especially the atmosphere created by Gandhi and her party in Jammu and Kashmir during the last election to win Hindu votes, the deeds of Gandhi's crony Bhajan Lal in Haryana, who sent his goons to attack gurdwaras, burn Sikh shops and incite Hindus, as well as Hindu Sangthanas and other communal organizations floated by Indira Congress in Patiala and other parts of Punjab, are a few examples.

BACKLASH

Vast majorities of Sikhs correctly used to laugh at and dismiss allegations of the extremist elements among Sikhs that Sikhs were treated as second-class citizens in India. However, after the army action, it will be very difficult to dismiss these arguments, especially if some news reports are indeed correct that parts of the country are rejoicing (some Hindus even allegedly distributing sweets) over the barbaric actions of the government.

Punjab had been very fortunate prior to the June army action. Despite the madness perpetrated by extremist elements over the last two years or so which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people, both the communities, showed tremendous restraint and understanding. Despite many attempts by fanatics on both the sides, Punjab did not witness any large-scale riots and clashes between the two communities who have lived in harmony and peace there for hundreds of years. Many had started fearing recently that unless the government and the leaders of the Sikh community entered into serious negotiations and arrived at a political settlement to various issues, the situation would get worse and the experience of the partition days would be repeated. The Indian government, instead of defusing the crisis and dealing with political issues, has created an explosive and extremely dangerous situation. With the emotions justifiably running so high

among the Sikhs and Punjab virtually under a state of siege, totally isolated from the rest of the country, if at all there is a fear of 1947 being repeated, it is now. Earlier, those who talked about Khalistan and secession could be counted on finger tips; now unless some swift measures are adopted to negotiate with the Akalis, many Sikhs may find Khalistan as the only alternative. And, the blame will be entirely on Indira Gandhi and her cohorts. The need of the hour is to heal the wounds, for Hindus and other minority communities to show sympathy with the Sikhs and develop a common platform to get rid of Gandhi and her family from the political scene of India, otherwise Punjab may never be the same and Sikhs may never feel to be a part of India. What happened to Sikhs today could happen to any other minority tomorrow if Gandhi feels that she can win some political leverage out of her actions.

Peace can still be restored in Punjab if the Gandhi government is forced out of power at the center, army moved out of Punjab, an independent inquiry into the military action in Punjab and extremist activities there is held, most of the Akali demands are met and a fresh election is held in Punjab.

Chronology of Events

(continued from page 9)

between different religious communities on one hand and insecurity of common man in general. Union government is not taking any initiative inspite of appeals by opposition parties and several intellectuals and nothing is expected in the near future. There is danger of communal backlash in Punjab. The Hindu killings by Sikh communalists in Kahnauwan and Bhani Mian villages in Gurdaspur districts on Feb. 21 is a pointer towards that.

As revealed by the press, some extremists are closely related to Congress(I). Ganga Singh Dhillon, an Indian born American citizen, raised the slogan of Sikh as a separate nation in his presidential address at the Sikh Educational Conference in Chandigarh in 1980. Giani Zail Singh was the president of this organization which invited Ganga Singh Dhillon. Second fact is about Jagjit Singh Chauhan President of National Council of Khalistan. He operates from US, UK and

other Western countries. He has close connections with Congress from 1968 onwards. When he came to India during Janata Party rule, he met top Congress(I) leaders including Indira Gandhi.

The April 25, 1982 issue of Sunday Weekly of Calcutta had reported its investigators had found circumstantial evidence to link some of Zail Singh's close friends with the activities of Dal Khalsa. According to the report, former Punjab Chief Minister Darbara Singh had brought to Gandhi's notice confessions of the Dal Khalsa leader Harisimran Singh who had reportedly named some of Zail Singh's followers as his contacts in the state and central governments. Zail Singh had reportedly overruled Punjab government decisions to check Bhindranwale.

[Excerpted from an article by Sucha Singh Gill & KC Singhal in Eco. & Pol. Weekly. This article was written prior to the army attack on the Golden Temple.]

Reactions Inside India to the Attack

Because of a total blackout of news from Punjab, it has not been possible to get any information about the reaction of the Sikh and Hindu communities to the occupation of the Harimandir Sahib and other gurdwaras by the army. According to the New York Times and the Christian Science Monitor, reports indicate that many Sikhs in Punjab were enraged when they heard of the army storming into the Golden Temple and rushed towards Amritsar but were stopped by the army. Outside Punjab, there have been protests by Sikhs all over India. In New Delhi, there were at least two protest demonstrations one resulting into a riot with the police. There were reports of a general strike and shut down as well as protests by Sikhs in Calcutta, Jaipur, Srinagar, Jammu, and other towns. Despite a curfew, demonstrators in Ludhiana tried to stage a procession but were beaten up by the police. At least 30 people had been killed by June 8 in police firings during protests in various states.

Sikhs all over India were reported to be very angry and hurt. According to one Sikh youth in New Delhi, most Sikhs had denounced the occasional killings of Hindus in Punjab by Sikh extremists, but that Hindus rejoiced, "celebrating it, distributing sweets," when Indian army troops violently flushed the militants from the Golden Temple. According to him, before the attack, very few people were in support of Khalistan, but now a majority of Sikhs supported the idea.

SIKH SOLDIERS MUTINIED

There were also reports of mutiny in many regiments in the Indian army where Sikhs, angered by the news of the attack on the Harimandir Sahib and killings of thousands of people, deserted. At first the government denied these reports, but later admitted of desertions in Sri Ganganagar, Pune, Ramgarh in Bihar, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and other parts of India. Over 200 Sikhs in Bihar killed their commanding officer Brigadier Puri and marched towards Delhi. Pitched battles were reported between the deserters and the army in which at least over 100 were killed. Most of the deserters were arrested and disarmed as they

moved towards Delhi; based on the military sources, at least 2000-3000 Sikh soldiers have mutinied. There were reports of brutalities committed on the deserters at many places. Over 90 Sikhs, most of them armed, were reported to have been arrested in Amritsar as they approached the Golden Temple.

SIKH MPs RESIGN

Two Sikh members of Indira Congress, Amrinder Singh and Devinder Singh Garha resigned from their seats in the Lok Sabha as well as from the Congress party in protest against the attack on the Golden Temple. According to Amrinder Singh, who was considered a strong candidate to succeed Darbara Singh as the Chief Minister of Punjab before the President's rule was imposed, storming of the Golden Temple "would injure the sentiments of Sikhs all over the world and em-

Khushwant Singh: "By ordering the military strike, Gandhi has made martyrs out of thugs and eliminated the representatives of the Sikh community with whom the government can talk."

bitter the existing, delicate ties between the two communities living in the state." The BBC reported that President Zail Singh was also contemplating resignation but was under pressure not to do so.

Khushwant Singh, a former editor of the Illustrated Weekly and the Hindustan Times, was quoted in the Christian Science Monitor as saying "What happened inside the Golden Temple is a turning point in modern India's history." Khushwant Singh who has been very close to Gandhi and her family, and was nominated to the Rajya Sabha by Gandhi, added, "The idea of Khalistan—a separate Sikh nation—always odious to me, has suddenly and unexpectedly sprung very much alive." An outspoken critic of the Akali leadership, both moderate and extremists, and also reportedly on the hit list of the extremists, Khushwant Singh said that by ordering the military strike, Gandhi had made martyrs out of thugs and eliminated the representatives of the Sikh community with whom the government could talk. "No Sikh of any credibility would dare to go and negotiate with her now," agreed

Satinder Singh, the editor of the Tribune group of publications in Punjab.

In an interview with the New York Times, Khushwant Singh argued that instead of attacking Bhindranwale and his well-armed followers in the en Temple, the army should have surrounded the area "and starved them to death." Added Khushwant Singh, "But this has hurt their (Sikhs') feelings. They are in a bloody mood. They are in a very foul mood." Khushwant Singh returned Padma Bhushan, an award he had received from the government, in protest.

Indra Kumar Gujral, former minister and ambassador to Moscow, said that the Gandhi government had alienated and humiliated many Sikhs by portraying the storming of the Golden Temple as "a great victory. This is not a victory. But if this is a defeat, we have all lost."

Gandhi's actions were however supported by former Prime Minister Morarji Desai who was visiting US. According to Desai, such an action should have been taken long time ago. Initial reports indicate that many leaders belonging to the national opposition parties have supported Gandhi's actions; however, according to a report in the Far Eastern Economic Review prior to army's storming into the Golden Temple, Janata President Chandra Shekhar and Telugu Dasam President and Andhra Chief Minister NT Rama Rao had questioned the wisdom of using the army.

Bhartiya Janata Party President Atal Bihari Vajpayee was quoted in the New York Times as saying that "Mrs. Gandhi is playing a very dangerous game. The long-term interests of the country are being sacrificed to short-term gains. But encouraging Hindu chauvinism is not going to pay. As the majority community, the Hindus must be above parochial politics." According to Vajpayee, Gandhi "wanted to take advantage of Hindu backlash. Mrs. Gandhi's whole strategy has been to pit moderates against extremists."

According to India Abroad, most national dailies supported government's moves. The Indian Express called the military operation as "exorcising an evil"; the Statesman said the action had to be carried out "in the larger interests of all."

The Main Threat to India's Unity

(continued from page 7)

4000-5000 people lost their lives and hundreds of thousands became homeless. Why? Indira Gandhi lost elections in southern states. In order to give a boost to her image, she needed a quick win. So, the negotiations with the leaders of the agitation in Assam which had been going on for over 3 years were suddenly broken when a settlement was almost in sight; agitation leaders were arrested and an election was imposed on a community which had warned that that would be like adding fuel to the fire. The situation in Assam now is like a volcano which is temporarily silent, about to burst any time, as the basic issues have not been addressed.

Gandhi made every attempt to create an explosive situation in Jammu and Kashmir by inciting communalism there during elections and afterwards. Dr. Farooq Abdullah's perseverance, opposition parties' support to Abdullah and former J&K governor BK Nehru's timely intervention saved that state from becoming another chaotic place because Gandhi was interested in certain political gains. It will not be surprising if she turns her attention back to Kashmir.

If recent bye-elections in many states and Lok Sabha elections last January are any indication, Gandhi's hold in the Hindi-speaking belt of Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar is being challenged. Given that Gandhi has already lost the South and the north-east, she will be willing to do anything to boost her image among the electorate in the Hindi-speaking belt. Traditionally Congress(I) party spoke in favor of rights of national and religious minorities; now in an attempt to win Hindu votes, Gandhi and her cohorts have been at the forefront of fanning out communal venom. There are even reports of Indira Congress and RSS collaborating at the grass roots level as well as in local elections.

Given the path Gandhi has adopted and her methods, she is going to get more and more desperate to cling to her seat. The more she and her family stays in power, the more danger there is to India's unity. Her ouster from Indian political scene is the call of the hour.

Indira's Action in Punjab Must be Denounced

(continued from page 7)

military action, the authorities had announced a major breakthrough in their attempts to curb terrorism following the arrests of some extremist gangs; it was also proclaimed that the situation in Punjab was well under control.

FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT BOGEY

As we go to press, the Gandhi government has started singing the old and familiar tune of foreign involvement and has started saying that if the government had not swiftly moved in as it did, there would have been yet another insurgency in yet another border state with foreign support in the country; the CIA, Pakistan, and perhaps China are also being blamed with

Gandhi's method of dealing with political problems is: first issues are dismissed; a wait and see attitude is adopted, ignoring the affected communities; then communities are divided and maneuvered through prolonged and futile negotiations, in an attempt to make political gains as a result of which the crisis becomes unmanageable; finally, in order to curb the agitation, drastic measures are undertaken to appear strong and firm to others.

references to arms and ammunition found in the Golden Temple during the raid. For over two years, Gandhi, her son and her cronies have been clamoring about foreign involvement in Punjab as in other

crises, be it in Assam, Jammu and Kashmir or Bombay. They were asked by the opposition and the press to produce evidence indicating any foreign involvement. The opposition even asked that if the government does not wish to make any sensitive information public because of a possible threat to national security, it could take the opposition into confidence; the government did not do any such thing which led to most people concluding that the so-called foreign involvement was a bogey and a cover up for the colossal failure of government's policies.

GANDHI'S METHOD MOST DANGEROUS

The present tragedy is yet another example of how dangerous Gandhi's method of dealing with political problems is: first issues are dismissed, wait and see attitude is adopted ignoring the affected communities; then communities are divided and maneuvered through prolonged and futile negotiations, in an attempt to make political gains as a result of which the crisis becomes unmanageable; finally, in order to curb the agitation, drastic measures are undertaken to appear strong and firm to others.

A similar question, which was raised February last year, following massacres in Assam taking the lives of over 4000 after the government imposed elections there, has sprung in this case also. What

else could the government have done in Punjab in the present circumstances? One must look into the background of the whole crisis and consider the role of various elements including the government. To anyone who closely followed the events in Punjab, it is a known fact that whenever negotiations were at a stage such that a possible settlement was in sight, some incident or the other would take place which would be used by the government to break off the negotiations. There was a clear indication that Gandhi was never really interested in seeing a political settlement and instead wanted to prolong the crisis.

WHY NOT EARLIER?

The paramilitary forces and the armed police have maintained a very strong presence in Punjab since August 1982, ever since the Akali agitation was launched. In every street corner of Amritsar, there used to be at least 5-6 armed policemen. All public grounds were camped by the paramilitary forces. Since October last year, when President's rule was imposed and the police and paramilitary forces were given unlimited powers under the Armed Forces Act after Punjab and Chandigarh were declared as disturbed areas, Punjab has virtually been a police state. Despite this as well as tremendous presence of paramilitary forces around the Golden Temple, one wonders how extremists were able to cross the

police barricades freely to come in and out of the Golden Temple and other gurdwaras with weapons after committing arson, loot, and murders, while the police was supposedly actively looking for them. Those living in Amritsar and other towns always wondered whether the authorities were really keen on dealing with the extremists.

Even if a drastic action was called for as a result of escalation of violence in May, the army could have cordoned off the Golden Temple and isolated the extremists in the gurdwaras. None of these actions would have apparently fitted in Gandhi's modus operandi; she was interested in presenting herself as the savior to the Hindu community as well as a strong and firm leader when the national elections are fast approaching, an image she had not able to project for a long time because of the prolonged crises in Assam, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir and other places.

POLITICAL ISSUES

The Akali agitation raised political issues—not only pertinent to Sikhs (except for some religious concerns) and Punjab but of importance to farmers all over India as well as all states in India. It has been unfortunate that the moderate Akali leadership could not separate politics from religion and did not win the support of non-Sikhs, which resulted in the agita-

Over 250 Die in Communal Riots in Bombay

Shiv Sena Go on Rampage

One of the worst communal riots erupted on May 17 in Greater Bombay area and continued for over 10 days. The rioting took the lives of over 300 people, with thousands injured, and approximately 100,000 made homeless. The riots followed a provocative speech by the founder of a Hindu-rightist organization Shiv Sena, Bal Thackeray, and a Shiv Jayanti procession thorough Bhiwandi, a working class township 35 miles away from Central Bombay and predominantly inhabited by Muslims textile workers working in powerloom factories. Bal Thackeray allegedly insulted the Prophet Mohammad and called Muslims as a cancer of Indian society which needed a surgical operation.

At least 110 people were killed in Bhiwandi area where two communities clashed with each other using spears, knives, rocks, fire bombs, kerosene and acid. These weapons and ammunition was apparently available in large quantities to rioters. According to a report in the Far Eastern Economic Review (June 14, 1984), one top Congress leader in the state told the Review privately that the pattern of the riots showed that they were pre-planned and Patil's government was forewarned and did nothing to prevent them.

About 60 people are estimated to have died in other parts of Bombay. Army was belatedly called in and curfew was imposed in most areas of Bombay. The worst incident in Bhiwandi which marked it apart from the rest of the communal killings was the slaughter of 27 Muslims by a frenzied crowd of several hundred Hindus who later poured kerosene on the bodies of their victims and burned them. Following the vendetta killings of the first few days, there were reports of internecine gang warfare in other parts of Bombay using the garb of communal trouble.

Those worst hit by the violence and riots have been the poor and slum dwellers who formed an easy prey for the angry mobs that roamed the streets. There have also been reports of police slackness and even of the police not doing anything for days while mobs looted and burned.

The infighting within Congress has been reflected in the government initiated relief programs also. The central government has made Antulay chairman of the riots relief committee, though Chief Minister Patil has formed a relief commit-

tee of his own. Both committees are reported functioning from the government secretariat adding to the annoyances of Patil whose supporters have accused Antulay of being behind the riots to destabilize the state government and stage a comeback.

Gandhi who visited the riot-stricken areas said that such incidents were not good for the nation and weakened its unity. She went on to add that certain foreign powers which were interested in seeing India disintegrate were behind these incidents. Gandhi also later announced that she would not replace Patil by anyone else.

SHIV SENA CHIEF CHARGED

Few days after the riots, the Maharashtra government filed criminal charges against Thackeray alleging that he made inflammatory speeches on April 21 that incited people to riot. The government also filed charges against Khalid Jahid, the editor of Akhbar-e-Alam, a Bombay Urdu weekly that published Thackeray's remarks and Khan, a Congress(I) MLA of Parbhani, 180 miles east of Bombay, for garlanding Thackeray's picture with chappals.

Chief Minister Patil has rejected a demand to set up a judicial inquiry into the riots. Instead, KP Medhekar, state director general of Police, has sought to set up special courts to try cases connected with the riots.

ACTION AGAINST PAKISTANIS

According to a report in the Statesman, officials in Bombay started taking action against Pakistani Nationals who were overstaying in the area. Apparently in an attempt to prove Indira Gandhi's point about foreign involvement, the central government have reported that a very large number of Pakistani Muslims are overstaying in Bombay city alone. According to the report, the center wants Maharashtra government to determine whether the overstaying Pakistanis have had any connection with the latest riots. The center also wants to find out whether the weapons captured from rioters - pistols, rifles, swords and bombs - were supplied by any overstaying Pakistani Muslims.

Bal Thackeray on Muslims

[The following is excerpted from an article in Gentleman by Bal Thackeray, the head of Shiv Sena, a Hindu communal organization in Maharashtra. His actions are believed to have been important in inciting the communal riots in Bhiwandi in May. The article excerpted here was written shortly before the riots. Ed.]

Bal Thackeray: "Muslims are a cancer in Indian society. India belongs to the Hindus, and it is our birthright to have a religious procession in our own country. The Muslims cannot be allowed this freedom."

Long, long ago I had stated: "Only those Muslims who accept civil codes, anti-cow slaughter and concepts of Hindu Rashtra should be allowed to stay in the country." I stand by my statement.

But it isn't simply a question of allowing Muslims to stay on in the country. The basic question is: do Indian Muslims have their hearts in Pakistan? If their hearts are in India, they are our brothers. But if their hearts are in Pakistan, India is not for them. They should migrate to Pakistan.

A simple example will illustrate my point. During the Indo-Pak cricket Test, when India lost to Pakistan, the Muslims in Bombay celebrated the occasion with firecrackers.

If the Muslims fear the Ekatmata Yatra, what about the various Muslim processions? During Id, they called Rajiv Gandhi and took out a huge khilafat procession. The khilafat processions contain antinational seeds. India belongs to the Hindus, and it is our birthright to have a religious procession in our own country. The Muslims cannot be allowed this freedom.

In 1947, the Muslim population was 2.5 crore and now it has crossed 14 crore. If this growth rate continues, a time will come when the Hindu-Muslim population will be equal, because the Hindu population is steadily declining while the Muslim population is increasing. And a time will come when Pakistan need not attack India. "They" will outnumber us in India. As long as politicians treat Muslims as a vote bank, their population will continue to grow disproportionately and the country will one day be in grave danger. There can be no compromise on this issue.



When the Muslims of Malegaon want a statue of Tippu Sultan, I doubt their intentions. Tippu Sultan cannot be accepted, we cannot accept him as a Messiah. After all, Tippu Sultan had attacked our country and massacred Hindus, so can we allow his statue to be erected?

We have never incited the Muslims but the Muslims have often provoked the Hindus by building mosques indiscriminately. And the government does not seem to bother because it has its eyes on Muslim votes.

Harijans convert to Islam because of poverty. The Hindu religion does not pay people to convert to Hinduism. In contrast, the Christians have the money and the desire to convert Hindus to Christianity. The Muslims have not problems in converting Hindus - they have Arab dollars now. Hindus are therefore converting to Islam not because of their love for Islam, but because of poverty. The petrodollar is playing havoc.

In India Muslims get a lot of incentives; in Pakistan they will never enjoy these privileges. Today, nobody can touch a mosque, but temples are demolished. If a road is being built in Pakistan, and a mosque happens to be in its path, the mosque is demolished. Gen. Zia and Gen. Ayub Khan have both demolished mosques and the Muslim populace has not uttered a word of protest. But if a mosque is demolished in India, the Muslims will immediately come out with a morcha, demanding their religious rights. And yet they dare not demand their rights in their own Islamic countries.

Shiv Sena 1970-1984

I. C.

Exactly 14 years ago, in the last communal riots at Bhiwandi, 78 persons had been killed. A commission headed by Justice D.P. Madon of the Bombay High Court had probed those riots and held the Shiv Sena partly responsible, along with Jana Sangh and the All-India Majlis Tameer-e-Millat. The Commission noted: "The Shiv Sena is responsible to the extent that the Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray made a communal speech about Bhiwandi and its Muslim inhabitants at a Shiv Sena meeting held in Thane on May 30, 1969, in the course of which he referred to Bhiwandi as a second Pakistan and said that such shameful incidents were taking place in Bhiwandi that he was ashamed to speak about them in the presence of ladies."

Addressing a national convention of his party in Bombay in January of this year, Thackeray reportedly told his sainiks: "We will have to launch another Quit India movement to get rid of these [Muslim] elements."

The political considerations behind the Shiv Sena's actions are not hard to identify. Thackeray had earlier successfully exploited the lack of a predominant Maharashtrian identity in Bombay city. The Sena's influence was at its peak in

the late 1960s following its violent agitation against South Indians. But this support began declining from the mid-70s owing to a number of developments: its pro-management role in the textile strike of 1974 (and 1982), its opposition to the state government employees' strike of 1974, its violent clashes with Dalit Panthers in 1973, its full support to Congress(I) particularly during the Emergency, and the corruption and gangsterism of its leaders and local cadres. As a result, by 1980, it was reduced to a network of gangs of unemployed youth extorting protection money from hawkers, shopkeepers, businessmen, etc., and seeking a cut in all kinds of illegal deals in building construction, etc. Many hardcore supporters in offices, factories and localities however remained with the party.

Thackeray is apparently hoping to revitalize the Sena on a wider base. Hence his strong appeals to Hindu sentiment.

POLICE SUPPORT

Numerous eyewitnesses, including reporters from national dailies, have recounted the openly partisan attitude of both the regular police and the state reserve police forces. In Govandi, for instance, the Shiv Sena and the police seemed to be working in collusion. The sainiks would attack Muslim houses and

retreat when confronted by the Muslims. The Muslims, chasing the sainiks away would find themselves lathi-charged, fired on and arrested by the police. This chain of events, narrated by a Maharashtrian Hindu youth, kept recurring until the army moved in. The incident in neighboring Cheeta Camp on May 23 was perhaps the most brazen: a police force shot dead eight persons, including a woman, in the predominantly Muslim slum.

The Madon Commission had noted that all the nine persons killed in police firings in Bhiwandi in 1970 were Muslims. He also cited several instances in which police officers and policemen either did not stop Hindu rioters or showed communal discrimination in dealing with riotous mobs, or gave incorrect reports that Muslims had rioted where in fact Hindu mobs had done the rioting.

Years later, the same partisan attitude of the police was very much in evidence.

A large section of Hindus, including even South Indians who are normally critical of the Shiv Sena, have welcomed the riots: the Muslims deserved what they got; they enjoyed the hospitality of this country and yet supported Pakistan; the Muslim population was rising alarmingly since they did not practice family planning and could have several wives; the Muslims were responsible for most of the

crime; the government had granted so many concessions to the minorities who were now sitting on our heads; why should Muslims be allowed to have separate laws? It was time they were taught a good lesson.

It is not very surprising that Chief Minister Vasantdada Patil, as well as chief contender Sharad Pawar appeared unconcerned even as the killings spread. The chief minister apparently felt that any statement that could be considered even mildly anti-Hindu or pro-Muslim could cause more harm to his political future in the state. Neither Patil nor Pawar had bothered to visit Malegaon, in Nasik district, when four persons had died in a major communal clash there last June. Muslim votes do not matter in the state's electoral politics.

The Shiv Sena is likely to have regained some of its popularity among the Maharashtrian Hindus in Bombay and the surrounding areas including Thane, Kalyan and Bhiwandi. As the riots continued, the party came to be regarded as a valiant protector of Hindus. In many affected localities, Hindus believed that attacks on them by Muslim mobs were either thwarted or would have been far worse had the Shiv Sainiks not been on guard. The party has been able to attract a large number of fresh activists, particularly unemployed teenagers.

(excerpted from E & PW)

Peasant Insurgency in Andhra

B.S. RAMAKRISHNA

[The following is excerpted from an article in the Indian Express.]

The police force, which is able to maintain a semblance of law and order in the extremist-infested areas of Warangal, Karimnagar and Khammam through creating a scare, appears to be helpless in a forest terrain.

The hilly forests bordering these and other adjoining districts in Orissa not only present a formidable communication problem to the police but provide a safe cover for the extremists. During the best part of the monsoon, the hill streams, rivers and tank breaches prevent intruders into the roadless jungles where lakhs of tribals live.

Over the last two decades, the extremists have built a strong base for themselves in these inaccessible forests gaining the confidence of the exploited tribals.

It was in one such forest at dusk that I was escorted to interview a prominent underground leader carrying a substantial price on his head. After an hour's drive on the pillion of my escort's motorbike through a serpentine route narrowed by lush wild growth on either side, we entered a clearing where a couple of tribal families had pitched their huts.

In the courtyard of one of the huts, I saw my "dangerous" host seated on a chair.

Walking towards him, I observed that he was dressed in khaki shorts and surrounded by a dozen companions in similar uniform. I observed the metal barrels of their rifles slung on their shoulders, glistening softly in the cool moonlight. I also saw two young women in saree with firearms on their shoulders.

My host wished to know the attitude of Chief Minister N.T.Rama Rao towards the extremists. I mentioned the decision of the state government to deploy the central reserve police force (CRPF) to curb the violent activities of the extremists.

"We are ready to face that challenge, come what may," he replied confidently.

My host recalled the pre-election speeches of the Telugu Desam leader in Khammam and Karimnagar districts when he acknowledged the Naxalites as "patriots" working for the uplift of the oppressed and how some borderline elements were "attracted" by the Telugu Desam party.

He was surprised at the rigid stand being taken by the chief minister now in viewing their struggle as a purely law and order problem rather than as a socio-economic issue.

He claimed that the common people in the villages are now supporting them more than ever before, and that no police force could weaken their movement. "When we could survive the more cruel repression of the 'pre-encounter' days in mid-seventies, how can another wave of police action frighten us," he asked.

The host asserted that in the villages under their influence there was no sphere of activity that excluded a positive role of his partymen.

ACTIVISTS

Thirty-year-old Babanna, who is totally blind, is the secretary of the Eturnagaram taluk unit of RCS and a person with an uncanny talent for identification of voices. He asserts that the poor landless feel secure in their organization as even legal problems with the concerned government departments are taken care of by RCS leaders.

The presence of RCS in the tribal hamlets has considerably deterred forest officials, who used to harass them for cutting dry wood required as fuel for cooking.

In Khammam district, the agitations launched by women bidi leaf collectors over the last five years have substantially

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Amnesty International Report

The Right to Life

"Encounter" Killings

Amnesty International has for many years been concerned about the practices reported to occur in a number of Indian states where the police take persons in custody, sometimes subject them to torture and subsequently kill them, official reports subsequently stating that these people were killed in "encounters" with the police, who were firing in "self-defense" or while persons killed were "resisting arrest" or "trying to escape." Encounter killings of persons allegedly involved with the political activities of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), commonly called "Naxalites," have been reported in recent years from the states of Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Orissa, Punjab, Bihar, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

portedly observing that "as such things (killings in staged "encounters") are happening and the guardians of law and order indulge in it, who is there to protect the citizens?"

"Furthermore, Amnesty International recommends that the government consider establishing an independent judicial mechanism before which complaints of these types of extrajudicial killings could be considered from the entire country...."

As the Indian government is aware, during initiatives taken following the



"Arresting, torturing and charging students with false cases and then labeling them 'extremists' is normal practice."

Andhra Becoming Police State

B.S. RAMAKRISHNA

STUDENT TORTURED

Eighteen-year-old D.Padma is a bright student at a degree college at Korutla town in Karimnagar district. She lives with her parents.

On Oct. 14, when she was dozing off, there was a knock on the door. She heard her father answer it. Before she knew what was happening, a strong palm closed her mouth fiercely while she felt another set of arms lifting her up bodily. Her screaming and shouting muffled, she was carried into a waiting jeep. She was gagged and her eyes bandaged; her arms wrenched behind and bound securely. The jeep drove off to an unknown destination.



Abducted by cops: Padma

I met Padma on Nov. 19 in the office—residence of an advocate practicing in Karimnagar. She said: "I suspected that there were at least three or four others in the jeep. When at last the jeep came to a halt, I was taken out and pushed into an isolated place. A man started questioning me about the whereabouts of extremist leaders including some student activists. I pleaded innocence but it was no use. The interrogator became impatient and began abusing."

"Shedding tears which my tormentor could not see, I maintained that I honestly did not know the answers to his questions. I realized that there were at least three persons in the place when they began hitting me with lathis. I squirmed and groaned as the lathis struck me relentlessly. Hardly had I recovered partly from the stinging blows when the questioner resumed asking about the extremists. The torture continued until daybreak when at last they retired with my head still tied and my eyes tightly bandaged."

"I was of course offered tea and food which I did not care to accept. As night came, the questioner arrived once again to extort information. My pleading had no effect as his men intensified the physical torture. I was left alone during the day hours the next and finally that evening (still blindfolded for the third day in succession), I was transported back to my

(continued on page 16)

"Their occurrence in India is summarized in a recent Amnesty International publication POLITICAL KILLINGS BY GOVERNMENTS (Amnesty International Publications, 1983). During 1983, Amnesty International has continued to receive reports of such "encounter" killings, some of which have as their victims individuals apparently selected for their alleged political beliefs or activities. The majority of these reports however appear to involve individuals sought by the police for their alleged criminal activities...."

"Amnesty International respectfully reiterates its appeal to the government to order a full independent inquiry by a judicial authority in all the cases of 'encounter' killings reported where there is reason to believe the police killed the persons after taking them into custody...."

Amnesty International understands that the Supreme Court of India is currently hearing writ petitions concerning a number of political activists alleged to have been killed in such staged "encounters" with the police in the states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. During these hearings, the Court expressed its concern about the continuation of these killings by the police, one member of the Supreme Court re-

publications of the report on Political Killings by Governments, Amnesty International raised the cases of 5 persons said to have been killed in such "encounters" in the period between November 1980 and January 1982. The cases concern Kannamani, shot on 27 December 1980 in Tamil Nadu, Ankam Narayana and Vsam Gajeneer, shot on 27 January 1982 in Andhra Pradesh; Ramsnehi Rai, shot on 21 December 1981 in Uttar Pradesh; and Peddi Shankar, shot on 2 November 1980 in Maharashtra state. Two of them were reported to be members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), one of them a member of the Radical Youth League, one a member of the Radical Students Union, and one a member of the Communist Party of India. Their case histories are attached in this review as Appendix B. Only in the case of Peddi Shankar has Amnesty International been informed through the Embassy in Helsinki on 5 October 1983 that the government held a "thorough inquiry following earlier allegations" of which Amnesty International had been given a summary of the findings. In this summary, it is stated that Peddi Shankar was killed during an exchange of fire between the police and an alleged Naxalite group of which Peddi Shankar was part. However, members of the Committee for the Protection of Democratic Rights in Bombay, making an on the spot investigation of the circum-

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and Vikram Savarkar's Hindu Mahasabha; (iii) Muslims procreated faster than Hindus, were antinational (deshdrohi), were pampered by the central government and should quit India if they could not accept a common civil code and give up cow slaughter; a joint Hindu front was necessary to confront Muslim ascendancy. These three issues have become Thackeray's main planks.

SHIV JAYANTI PROCESSION

In Bhiwandi, with a Muslim population of about 65%, the authorities permitted the Shiv Sena to hold a Shiv Jayanti procession on May 3 for the first time in 14 years. A senior official now reveals that permission was granted not despite the inflammatory speeches and the coming together of Hindu militant bodies in the state, but because of these developments: "It was felt that it was not possible to ban the procession in 1984; the Shiv Sena was bent on the procession and we may not have been able to hold them."

The context needs to be set out. The Shiv Jayanti procession in the Kalyan-Bhiwandi area, if not elsewhere, has come to mean a celebration of 17th century Hindu-Muslim battles laden with symbolic import for present-day tensions. Each year the procession has been banned, the propaganda has increased in these two townships about "a majority of Hindus in a secular country not being allowed to celebrate their own festivals," and more and more people have been mobilized to that point of view.

In 1982 the Kalyan procession was permitted for the first time with a 1,200-strong police force in attendance. When Kalyan was allowed once more to celebrate Shiv Jayanti in 1983 but Bhiwandi was refused, the Shiv Sena staged a satyagraha in Bhiwandi while in Kalyan Vikram Savarkar, who was banned from entering the town, slipped in and announced that he would first lead the procession in Kalyan and then go on to Bhiwandi, 15 km away. He was picked up from the main chowki and held at the government rest house. A mob of 700 collected at the gate. A compromise was achieved: Savarkar would join the procession in the town but not go to Bhiwandi.

In Bhiwandi in 1984, the authorities were faced with the possibility that the Hindu Mahasabha and Shiv Sena would force a confrontation and would bring 5,000 people or more from towns and villages outside to march into the town if the procession was banned again. Consultations in Bhiwandi with peace committee members and Muslim leaders including Cong(I) MLA Waqar Momin convinced the home ministry that a procession with some restrictions could be allowed.

Even a week after Shiv Jayanti, it looked like a wise decision to have allowed a controlled procession and quelled some of the anger and fears associated with it in Bhiwandi. If the Muslims felt this was one more setback to them — another recent one was the government revoking permission for a slaughter-house — there was no visible sign of it. But then came the Akhbar-e-Alam; copies of this Urdu weekly from Bombay arrived in Bhiwandi on May 12. It contained what purported to be Bal Thackeray's speech of April 21, including allegedly insulting references to the Prophet Mohammed. The paper apparently got the information from other papers. Thackeray has denied

making such references but has not denied other provocative references ("Muslims are a cancer in Indian society" and so on).

There is no doubt that Muslims in Bhiwandi were angered. There was a lot of talk about forming a Muslim Sena, fears of assault, etc. But there is no evidence that these anxieties were converted into action.

On May 11, in Parbhani in faraway Marathwada, a small group of demonstrators garlanded a picture of Bal Thackeray with chappals. Cong(I) MLA A.R.Khan was among them. Shiv Sena organized protest bandhs on May 15 and 16 in Bombay. It did nothing in Bhiwandi, presumably because it has no base in the town itself.

On the evening of May 17, at a public meeting of Muslims of all parties and persuasions called to discuss the alleged insults from Thackeray, it was apparent that young Muslims were extremely agitated. However, the meeting closed on the moderate proposal to send a committee to Thackeray to confirm for itself the content of his speech. This much was public knowledge that night in Bhiwandi.

ACTUAL ATTACKS

Piecing together the police record and the reports of people affected in the violence, it appears that two things happened. One, there were massed attacks on three huge basti settlements on the periphery of the town, one as early as 2 AM Friday morning and the others at 6 AM. Secondly, in the center of the town, there were a series of small incidents one after another by both communities beginning as early as 1 AM with stone-throwing; 45 minutes later came the first fire-calls.

The timings suggest that the massed attacks on the outskirts and the incidents in the center occurred independently. The nature of the violence suggests that the first was well-planned and the second spontaneous. At a later stage, as the incidents multiplied, large retaliatory attacks by both Hindus and Muslims occurred in and near the center of the town.

On the outskirts, the first locality to be hit was the northwest extremity of Rasulabad and Khadipaar, the first a predominantly Muslim locality of houses and shops and the second Muslim and some dalit chawls. This was attacked and burned at 2 AM after a small cluster of single-room Muslim houses at Teli ki Chawl had also been demolished. At 3:20 AM the police recorded a Hindu mob at Nadinaka, which they believe consisted of villagers. The only route they could have followed was through Teli ki Chawl, Rasulabad-Khadipaar to Nadinaka.

Azminagar to the southwest is a desolation of some 1,000 small hutments razed to the ground. This Muslim basti was hit between 5 and 6 AM and the inhabitants were mostly women and children since the men were away on the 7 PM to 7 AM powerloom shift. Local people said a mob of between 500 and 700 came at dawn with flaming torches and guns and swords from the countryside and attacked the basti, which was destroyed completely before the police arrived some hours later.

In the east, Naibasti was hit at 6 AM by a mob from Kalyan Road and the open countryside. Naibasti began as a resettlement colony after the 1970 riots and consists of a mixed Hindu-Muslim population. The Hindus are mostly immigrants from Tamil Nadu and Andhra and the Muslims from UP. The huge sprawl of perhaps 3,000 small houses, chawls and hutments, authorized and unauthorized, covers the slope of a hill in sections. Two-thirds have been destroyed. Unlike Azminagar where there was no resistance and a fire started at one end could consume the whole colony, here the residents speak of a two-hour battle with the marauders

who looted in the wake of the killings and arson. The land on which Naibasti has spread is said at one time to have belonged to a neighboring village but was acquired by the government for resettlement of people affected in the 1970 riots.

Of the large incidents in the center of town, Hindu and Muslim confrontations and then attacks on powerlooms and houses in the mixed locality of Gauripada and Telipada began at 6:45 or so and half an hour later this is where the state reserve police fired for the first time. The destruction of mainly Hindu hutments and some shops at Narpoli began before 9 AM, the Muslim residential locality of Dargah Road had been attacked by 9:15, and the Hindu chawls and looms of Tawre Compound by 10:30 AM.

The first arson incident in the Anjurphata locality in the south occurred on Friday morning when Andhra Hindus fled across the Bombay-Nasik Road to an empty compound and 40 Muslim households to Ansaribagh, an isolated factory, farm and bungalow owned by M.I. Ansari, president of the Bhiwandi Chamber of Commerce and powerloom-owner. The Ansari compound was besieged throughout Friday night and attacked by a 500-strong mob consisting of local villagers and others. This is where some 27 of the refugees were butchered and burned to death on Saturday.

The final proof of the nature of the offensive in this Muslim-majority town comes from the official number of dead, which totaled 108 — 90 were killed in incidents other than police firings. Many, including the Ansari refugees, are unidentifiable; even among the rest, 37 are Muslims and 16 Hindus.

VILLAGERS MOBILIZED

Who was behind the massed attacks on bastis on the outskirts of Bhiwandi? Villagers were recognized by the victims of attacks in at least two cases, Ansaribagh and Naibasti. Police and local people's reports indict villagers in the attacks on the Teli ki Chawl, Rasulabad-Khadipaar stretch. They were almost certainly involved in the attacks on Azminagar. The villages in the vicinity of all these places are Karivli, Bhadvad, Kharbao, Kalvar, Khamba, Katai and Temgar.

They have large numbers of Marathas but the predominant community is Agris, a "highly volatile and aggressive community," say the police, largely unemployed from whom lumpen elements may easily be recruited, say local CPM workers. It is also believed that the Shiv Sena has been mobilizing them since the mid-1970s.

The Shiv Sena's rural activities may come as something of a surprise for an organization of its kind but the Shiv Sena has begun to figure in panchayat elections in Thane district. A scenario that left-wing organizations in Bhiwandi as well as some police officials find entirely credible is the active mobilization of neighboring villagers by the Shiv Sena (and perhaps other Hindu militant organizations) originally for the Shiv Jayanti procession/confrontation. Once the initial ground was laid in the villages, the mobs at dawn on Friday, May 18, would be a logical next step.

(excerpted from E & PW)



Democratic Rights Activists Attacked

Asghar Ali Engineer, a leading writer, social activist and commentator on democratic and civil rights movements in India, especially those affecting the Muslim community, was brutally attacked and severely injured last month while visiting a mosque in Cairo run by the Indian Bohra Muslim community. Asghar ali, who belongs to this community, was visiting Cairo along with two Indian members of parliament at the invitation of Egyptian President Mubarak to attend a meeting on Palestine.

During his stay, Engineer along with the two MPs visited the Bohra mosque. Upon entering the mosque, he was immediately recognized, surrounded and brutally assaulted. Bruised and bleeding, he was first rushed to hospital and then returned to Bombay the next day. His eyesight has been badly affected and he has undergone ophthalmic surgery.

Engineer was reportedly assaulted by henchmen of the Syedna, the spiritual leader of the Dawoodi Bohra sect, whose obscurantist, feudal and scandal-ridden rule over his community has been courageously opposed by Engineer and other democratic reformers within the Bohras for many years. Engineer started the Bohra Youth Movement several years ago which has struggled for marriage reforms, women's education and other democratic issues. Engineer and other Bohra social

reformers have also tried to put an end to the feudal practice of paying tribute to the Syedna on every social or family occasion, such as marriage, birth of a child, etc. Many Bohris, most of whom are small, lower middle-class traders and shopkeepers, can ill-afford this expense but comply with it under social pressure. While these practices have greatly enriched the Syedna and his family, who live in lavish splendor in Bombay, the majority of Bohris have been afraid to oppose them due to fear of religious and social ostracism.

The movement led by Asghar Ali and other reformers has greatly enraged the Syedna and his cohorts who have, for some years, been openly threatening physical violence against the reformers. A few years ago, while speaking at a public rally in Hyderabad, Asghar ali was attacked by knife-wielding lackeys of the Syedna and his face was slashed. Fortunately, the attackers were restrained by members of the audience before they could inflict more damage. The latest attack shows the desperation of the Syedna clique; they are afraid of losing their autocratic hold on the community. However, it is not very likely that they will be able to intimidate Asghar Ali or deter him from continuing his struggle for social justice.

Anatomy of Communal Riots

"The riots have been characterized by the inevitable and sickening cycle of action and retaliation. The worst sufferers, as is often the case, have been the poor and working people whose flimsy dwellings make them particularly vulnerable to arson."

According to official figures, over 200 persons have been killed, many more injured and thousands rendered homeless in the vicious spell of communal Hindu-Muslim conflict that has rocked the outskirts of Bombay over the last few weeks. The worst episodes of violence have been reported from Bhiwandi, a small town thirty-odd miles north of Bombay with a majority Muslim population. Bhiwandi was the scene of an earlier devastating communal riot in 1970 which left many dead, injured and homeless. On this occasion, communal violence seems to have spread closer to Bombay, to suburbs such as Ghatkopar and Govandi which had this type of conflict before. As in other such occurrences, the riots have been characterized by the inevitable and sickening cycle of action and retaliation. The worst

"Contrary to some beliefs, communal riots do not just take place in random fashion. On the contrary, they are often planned and instigated by interested parties with the objective, usually, of deriving some immediate political benefit from the event."

sufferers, as is also so often the case, have been the poor and working people whose flimsy dwellings make them particularly vulnerable to arson.

RIOTS ARE ORGANIZED

Contrary to some beliefs, communal riots do not just take place in random fashion. On the contrary, they are often planned and instigated by interested parties with the objective, usually, of deriving some immediate political benefit from the event. While, in the Indian context, the dry tinder for a communal flare-up, and for that matter, for a caste, linguistic, etc. clash, lies in the history of communal antagonism and suspicion, there has to be a spark and the "proper" atmosphere for the fire to ignite. Both elements were present in the Bombay riots.

ROLE OF SHIV SENA

The post-mortem into the causes of the riots will doubtless be pursued in the coming months. However, from the sequence of events and the context in which they occurred, it appears that their main instigator was the Shiv Sena possibly with the assistance of other Hindu chauvinist forces.

The Shiv Sena, which had been a major fascist type of force in Maharashtra, particularly in Bombay, in the 1970s had, in the last two years, lost a lot of ground in its home base — the Bombay textile mill areas like Parel and Lalbaug. This was due to its opposition to the textile workers strike. From a position some years ago of being able to paralyze all of Bombay in a bandh, the Shiv Sena had reached a point where its leader, Bal Thakre, trying to speak at a workers' rally a few months ago in Shivaji Park, Dadar, opposite the Shiv Sena's head office, was booed off the stage by thousands of textile workers less than a minute into his speech. Since then and with the elections fast approaching, the Shiv Sena has been itching to create an incident which would bring it back to public notice and mobilize its following once more. Given its earlier history of inciting parochial, linguistic and communal clashes in Maharashtra, instigating a Hindu-Muslim clash would be something entirely in its character.

The violence in Bhiwandi this time followed a Shiv Jayanti procession and an openly inflammatory speech by the Shiv Sena leader denigrating Prophet Mohammed. The earlier Bhiwandi riot in

1970 had also taken place after a Shiv Jayanti procession. After that, the state authorities had banned the holding of Shiv Jayanti in Bhiwandi until this year. The question is why the authorities decided to lift the ban this year when they should have known fully well that taking out a Shiv Jayanti procession in a Muslim majority area would be nothing but a gross provocation; that it would be followed by retaliatory actions, such as raising green flags in place of "bhagwa jhanda" by Muslim fanatics which would in turn be followed by further retaliation by Hindu reactionaries and so on in a cycle culminating in violence. Was the decision to lift the ban influenced or connived at by elements within the ruling Cong(I) government in Maharashtra to further destabilize the Chief Minister Vasantdada Patil who has been kept on tenterhooks by the central Congress leadership?

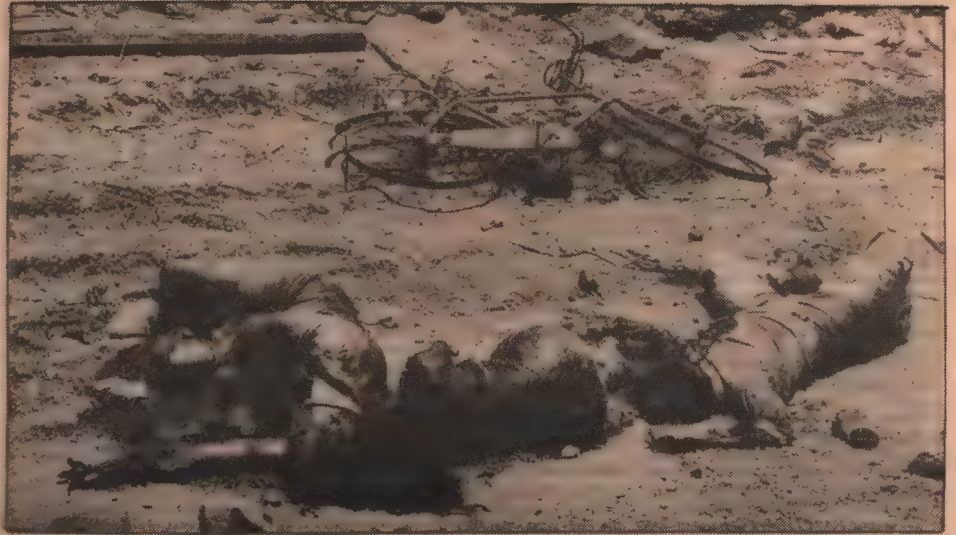
THE NATIONAL SCENE

While the Shiv Sena supplied the spark that ignited the immediate communal fire in Bombay and its suburbs, the responsibility for creating a national atmosphere in which outbreaks of communal violence are bound to occur lies squarely with the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Over the last year in North India, particularly in the Jammu & Kashmir election campaign, Gandhi has been delivering the rankest communal speeches, calling Muslims "unpatriotic" and worse, in a bid to win the Hindu majority votes on an outright communal basis. Cong(I) loss in Kashmir only seems to have to have taken her further down the communal path; trying to topple Farooq Abdullah government by foul means, naming him and his party as "Pakistani agents," etc. This type of propaganda has undoubtedly had its effect on the rest of the country too. Now the chickens are coming home to roost. Mrs Gandhi has sown the wind and the nation is now reaping the whirlwind.

In the type of communal atmosphere she has created by her utterances, all kinds of vested interests try to profit. Politicians of various hues cynically manipulate sentiments to win votes. Other vested interests, such industrialists and landowners, try to divide and destroy working-class and agricultural labor organizations and movements by dividing the workers along communal or casteist lines, by creating communal incidents which divert public attention or lead to section 144 in affected areas making other struggles difficult.

In fact, this has been happening in Maharashtra itself over the last six months or so. The Patil Pawan Sanghatana, a landlords organization in Dhulia district, was behind the communal attacks in Shelti largely to discredit and weaken the Shramik Sanghatana, the agricultural labor organization in that district.

All of this is an old, tried and tested method used by every ruling group from the British down to their successors to divide the people. The victims of these tactics are like the poor small powerloom workers of Bhiwandi who see their little huts burnt, their families killed or uprooted and their lives shattered.



Do Muslims Have a Right to Prosper?

In just about a week of communal violence in Bhiwandi and in Bombay city and some of its suburbs, a total of 210 persons have been killed and 686 injured. This is according to official figures, which are generally regarded as substantial underestimates.

Those who have tried to assess the general response to the violence, in which Muslims have been overwhelmingly at the receiving end, have found depressingly little sympathy for the victims or anger over the occurrence of murder and mayhem on so vast a scale. Instead, the feeling appears to be fairly widespread that Muslims had more or less invited the trouble on themselves by what is regarded as their increasingly aggressive public observance of religious rituals and practices and the proliferation of new mosques and renovation of old ones. These developments, it is taken for granted, have been made possible by the large-scale inflow of "Arab money" to Muslim organizations and institutions in India.

Now, among the Indians working in West Asia, there may indeed be a substantial proportion of Muslims and, like the rest, they no doubt regularly remit money to India for the maintenance of their families, etc. There is nothing sinister about these remittances; indeed, as is well known, foreign remittances have propped up the country's balance of payments for the last many years. Similarly, is it not likely that, despite all the handicaps and prejudices they labor under, a small number of Muslims in different parts of the country may be making good in entirely legitimate activities such as trade and small industry or the professions? The funds to finance the proliferation of mosques, etc., or the relatively ostentatious observance of religious festivals and rituals by Muslims, which have drawn so much attention and comment, could quite plausibly come out of the growing prosperity of these sections of the community. But the propaganda of Hindu communal organizations, which seems to have considerable influence among the large mass of Hindus, cannot accept that Muslim religious institutions (or for that matter nonreligious ones like colleges or schools) could have entirely legitimate sources of finance. No, the money must be coming, clandestinely, from Islamic governments and religious bodies abroad

out to promote militant Islam in India. In other words, in this supposedly "sovereign socialist secular democratic republic" of ours, any signs of prosperity — meager as they invariably are — among Muslims cannot be accepted as legitimate, but must be suspected to have sinister, conspiratorial sources.

ADMINISTRATIVE BREAKDOWN

The Bhiwandi-Bombay riots have also served to bring out the extent to which the political-administrative systems have broken down. At the political level, the main concern of the chief minister was how his opponents within Congress(I) would exploit the riots to undermine his position. This led him to avoid saying or doing anything that could be attacked by Hindu organizations. Hence, for instance, his eagerness to disclose at his press conference on May 19 that the government was not contemplating taking any action against Bal Thackeray.

There appears to be general agreement about the ineffectiveness — worse, blatant pro-Hindu partisanship — of the police. In the most tragic episode of the massacre of 27 Muslim women, children and men who had taken shelter in a house in Bhiwandi, it took many hours for policemen to arrive on the scene despite the police commissioner of the area having been repeatedly informed that the house had been surrounded by a murderous mob.

Since much of the killing, looting and arson was the work of local lumpen elements, the police should have been able to take effective action. In fact, precisely the opposite proved to be true: because of their close links with these elements, the police in most cases evaded taking action or even colluded with the offenders. A notable feature of the riots was thus the complete loss of confidence in the police on the part of the victims and correspondingly their view of the army as their savior.

The situation was driven home by the statement of Major-General Rawat, the general officer commanding Maharashtra and Gujarat, at his press conference on May 23, that the army had been able to bring the situation under control without even having to open fire, except once. One of the more ominous aspects of the recent riots is how the army is becoming the first resort, instead of the last, in dealing with situations which it is the ordinary responsibility of the civil administration to deal with.

(from Econ. & Pol. Weekly)

INDIA NOW

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Police Terror in Andhra

JVALA PRASAD

Recently there have been several reports of militant political activity as well as police repression on a wide scale in Andhra. As is usual in situations like this, the victim of political repression is not just the "extremist," but any of those who have been denied justice throughout their lives who dare to think of questioning the rationale for the present social system. The police and state machinery find the appellation "extremist" extremely convenient to justify total disregard for the very laws they are supposed to uphold. Even those who are suspected of mere acquaintance with political activists are subjected to inhuman harassment.

In Karimnagar district, police had beaten up villagers and spread terror in their villages for boycotting liquor shops under the guidance of the Rythu Coolie Sangham (RCS), a farm labor organization. A college student was tortured under mere suspicion that she could give information about the whereabouts of some activists. In a brilliant demonstration of the nature of our so-called democracy, sarpanches (elected officials of the village) are arrested, tortured and directed to resign, for having committed the "crime" of belonging to RCS. In Warangal district, police raided the houses of landless dalits of Venkatapuram village, thrashed eleven persons, and illegally detained them for seven days for implementing an agreement with the rich farmers and reaping the crop on six acres of the village tank-bed.

"Naxalites are true nationalists" and waved a white flag at them during his election campaign, has ordered the doubling of the police force in northern Andhra to fight "extremists." Lest the local police prove too human to prove adequate to the task of mercilessly staging "encounters," and otherwise harassing local people, two battalions of the Central Reserve Police have been ordered into the state. Although civil liberties organizations have completely exposed the fact that alleged "encounters" of the police are just cold-blooded murders, with no exchange of fire with the political activists shot down, these exhibitions of police power continue. Police retaliates by expanding its definition of the word "extremist" to include civil liberties activists and also those who demand implementation of social reform measures.

Kondapalli Seetharamaiah, the leader of the People's War Group of CPI(ML), escaped from prison recently, and the police have been whipped into a frenzy to rearrest him. Like him, there are several other political activists detained by the police on unproved charges.

The government mentions Karimnagar, Warangal, Nizamabad, Khammam and Adilabad as the districts where the "extremists" are active. The current village structure in these areas inherits its form from that of the erstwhile Hyderabad state ruled by the Nizam. Farm-servants are the poorest class, paid about



In Kakatiya University, Warangal, where a large number of students are alleged "extremists," police recently gatecrashed into the university and beat up students and faculty members on the pretext of a fracas between some students and the road transport authorities. Orders banning meetings are almost permanently in force on campus. Recently, a visiting European scholar as well as (on another occasion) K.G.Kannabiran, president of the AP Civil Liberties Committee, were not allowed to address students. Kannabiran told the Indian Express correspondent that the students' union of the Kakatiya University college had invited him but the District Collector and the Superintendent of Police had rejected the proposal. "Where is civil liberty if the district authorities have a say as to which person should participate in a function," he asked.

As another example of the harassment of students, about 300-400 students on their way to attend a student rally in Hyderabad were forcibly detained by the police, stripped of their shirts, lined up on the platform, and beaten savagely with lathis.

Right now, the police of Andhra, MP and Maharashtra are seriously worried about the "growing Naxalite menace." N.T.Rama Rao, who had declared that

Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,500 per year on the average. They are also usually bonded to the landlords by an irredeemable debt and have to be at their beck and call all day, putting up with any amount of ill-treatment and abuse. In practice, it is these unwritten laws that the police attempt to uphold when they are used to crush any struggle against the stranglehold of oppression. Law here does not mean the high-flown phrases overflowing with the milk of human kindness that remain firmly shut up in dusty documents like the Indian Constitution, the Minimum Wages Act, the Abolition of Bonded Labor Act, etc.

The hilly forests on the borders of Andhra and Orissa also provide safe cover for "extremist" operations. The forests are populated by tribals who subsist on shifting cultivation (called "podu"), collection of bidi leaf and other farm and forest produce. Landlords in nearby villages (on whose farms they serve as laborers) and forest officials find it easy to manipulate them. The Rythu Coolie Sangham units have been successful in working for wage increases in bidi leaf collection, protection for shifting cultivation in forest areas, protection for shifting cultivation in forest areas, protection from harassment by forest officials, and the establishment of People's Courts for

(continued on page 17)

Supreme Court Decision on Manipur Disappeared

Wives Awarded Exemplary Costs

The Supreme Court on April 23 ordered the central government to pay Rs 100,000 each to the wives of two Nagas who could not be produced before the court despite several opportunities given to the government.

Justice D.A.Desai and Justice O.Chinnappa Reddy, in their judgment, said that there was prima facie case of murder and ordered the Superintendent of Police, Ukhrul, in Manipur state, to start investigations.

The judgment also said that the government "misled the court by presenting a distorted version of facts" in the case.

"The Supreme Court's judgment is salutary and timely insofar as it reminds those in authority that they cannot get away with murder and that they will be accountable through a writ of habeas corpus."

Though the government committed contempt of court by "wilfully disobeying" the court, the court did not impose the usual penalty of imprisonment and fine considering the circumstances of the case.

These unprecedented orders were passed on a writ petition filed by a student of the Jawaharlal Nehru University last year with the help of a civil liberties organization. The suit charged that on March 10, 1982, in the village of Huining in Ukhrul, two of its respected residents, C.Daniel, retired Naik Subedar of the Manipur Rifles and headmaster of the local junior high school, and C.Paul, assistant pastor of the Huining Baptist Church, were taken away by the jawans of an army regiment to its camp nearby. No one has seen them since.

In November last year, the Supreme Court asked the government, the Home Secretary and the commandant of the Sikh Regiment, Phungrei Camp, to produce the two Nagas in court on Dec. 12. Several authorities told the court that they were unable to produce the two Nagas. An official of the Defense Ministry stated on Dec. 12 that it was unable to produce them "due to circumstances beyond their control." The Ministry repeated its excuse that the Nagas were not in the custody of the army. This had long been disbelieved by the Supreme Court.

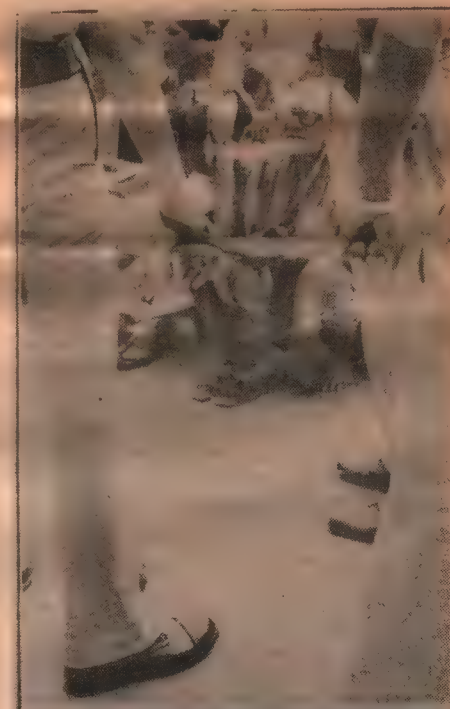
A Deputy Secretary in the Home Ministry told the court that the Nagas were not in their custody. In April this year, the

Central Bureau of Investigation also reported that their efforts to locate them yielded no results. This was wilful disobedience of the court, the judgment said.

"Keeping in view the torture, the agony and the mental oppression through which C.Thingkhulla, wife of C.Daniel, and C.Vangawla, wife of C.Paul, had to pass, we direct that as a measure of exemplary costs, the Union Government shall pay Rs one lakh to each of the women within a period of four weeks," the order said.

The judges queried the Attorney-General on what to do next and came out with their own prescription. They told the Attorney-General that adjourning the matter again to enable the government to trace and locate Daniel and Paul "is to shut the eyes to the reality and to pursue a mirage." They were inclined to direct registration of an offense and an investigation, but said they would express no opinion as to what fate had befallen to Daniel and Paul, except saying "that they have not met their tragic end in an encounter as is usually claimed and the only possible inference that can be drawn from circumstance already discussed is

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Andhra Becoming Police State

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village in the jeep and left a few furlongs away from my home with a stern warning that I dare not breathe a word about what happened during the last two days."

Padma has no doubt that this horror on her was planned by police investigators who had turned kidnappers. She lodged a complaint with the District Collector but it remains to be seen which policemen the District Collector will deploy to inquire into her charges.

SARPANCHES HARASSED

K. Malla Reddy, sarpanch of Padira village in Sircilla taluk, is one among the several belonging to Chandrapulla Reddy's CPI(ML) who got elected in the panchayat elections in 1981. He is also general secretary of the Karimnagar district unit of the AP Civil Liberties Committee. He was arrested last October for guiding a factfinding team of APCLC into the death of a person. He was allegedly tortured by the police while in custody and was directed to resign from his post.

In Dumala, adjoining Padira, Ella Reddy, another sarpanch, was forced to

sign his resignation letter by the police, it is reported.

Jara Laxmaiah, sarpanch of Bodu village in Sudimalla taluk in Khammam, was taken into custody ostensibly for "questioning" in connection with the murder of a CPI worker. In the police station, he was made to lie on his stomach with his legs tied and lifted towards the roof. Two policemen sat on his back and two others broke his knees. The police asked him to quit the Rythu Coolie Sangham and disclose the whereabouts of underground leaders.

According to K.G.Kannabiran, president of APCLC, the police are harassing persons who approach APCLC for help because the intervention of APCLC exposes police atrocities.

"Forcing detainees to drink urine in lock-ups is a usual strategy of the police to humiliate political workers and an official who commits more atrocities is promoted by the state government," he says.

(excerpted from the Indian Express)

Amnesty International Report

(continued from page 13)

stances of his killing, have maintained that "Shankar was killed by an SRP squad, shot in the back, at chest level, from a distance of roughly 50 feet, neither he nor the four others with him once fired a shot. There was no 'encounter'."

While appreciating that the Indian government held an investigation into the circumstances of Peddi Shankar's death ..., Amnesty International believes that only the publication of a full report, which details the nature of the inquiry held, the methods of its investigations and the evidence relied upon in support of its conclusions, would allay remaining doubts that Peddi Shankar was in fact shot dead in cold blood by the police.

As the Indian government is aware Amnesty International had suggested that the government order impartial investigations by an independent judicial body into such cases.

Amnesty International respectfully reiterates its appeal to the government to order a full independent inquiry by a judicial authority in all the cases of "encounter" killings reported where there is reason to believe the police killed the persons after taking them into custody...

Furthermore, Amnesty International recommends that the government consider establishing an independent judicial mechanism before which complaints of these types of extrajudicial killings could be considered from the entire country....

We understand that the judges of the Supreme Court, during their preliminary deliberations in September this year on consideration of reports of "encounter" killings, had also suggested the setting up of a judicial commission to inquire into these types of incidents.

A Supreme Court judge: "As such things (killings in staged 'encounters') are happening and the guardians of law and order indulge in it, who is there to protect the citizens?"

FACILITATING INFRINGEMENTS OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE

Amnesty International is furthermore concerned that a number of similar laws are in force in various Indian states, which by conferring on the security forces broadly defined powers to shoot to kill, appear to facilitate arbitrary killings of persons for holding political beliefs attributed to them. In its description of "encounter" killings in India in its 1983 publication Political Killings by Governments, Amnesty International identified the DISTURBED AREAS ACT OF ANDHRA PRADESH as legislation which

Andhra Pradesh lawyers had said facilitated the shooting of suspected political activists by the police after arrest in the state. Similar legislation is currently in force in the north eastern region under the ARMED FORCES (ASSAM AND MANIPUR) SPECIAL POWERS ACT, NO.28 of 1958, and Amnesty International is greatly concerned that similar broadly defined powers have recently been extended to the armed forces and police in the Punjab under the PUNJAB DISTURBED AREAS ACT; the CHANDIGARH DISTURBED AREAS ACT; and the ARMED FORCES (PUNJAB AND CHANDIGARH) SPECIAL POWERS ACT, passed by the Lok Sabha on 17 November 1983...

..., the security forces have been given indemnity from prosecution concerning anything done in the exercise of the powers of this legislation. The latter provision, which is also a feature of the ARMED FORCES (ASSAM AND MANIPUR) SPECIAL POWERS ACT in force in the north eastern region and the ANDHRA PRADESH SPECIAL POWERS ACT, creates the impression that the security forces can act with impunity when misusing their broadly defined powers to shoot to kill and could thus encourage further abuse...

Amnesty International believes that the broadly defined powers given to the security forces under the special legislation described above exceed the limitations set in Article 3 of the Code of Conduct of Law Enforcement Officials and particularly in the commentary thereto, and facilitate the occurrence of extrajudicial killings. This is especially so given that the security forces have been given immunity from prosecution, even when abusing the special powers given to them under these acts.

Amnesty International respectfully submits that the Indian government redefine the broad powers given to the security forces to shoot to kill so that they are brought in accordance with the limitations normally laid down for legitimate law enforcement and with the rules laid down in the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials. These laws include the PUNJAB AND CHANDIGARH DISTURBED AREAS ACT, the ARMED FORCES SPECIAL POWERS ACT and the ARMED FORCES (ASSAM AND MANIPUR) SPECIAL POWERS ACT, No. 28 of 1958 (11 September 1958) and the ANDHRA PRADESH DISTURBED AREAS ACT."

Peasant Insurgency

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increased their earnings. As compared to a meager three paise for 100 bidi leaves doled out by the contractors in the past, they are now able to get 16 paise.

The RCS has penetrated the community life of the tribals to an extent where the disputes of a social nature arising between individuals and families are also settled through "people's courts." Cases pending in legally constituted courts are known to have been withdrawn following the quick justice achieved in the people's courts.

LIQUOR SHOP BOYCOTT

Ever heard of policemen beating up people who have decided to abstain from drink? Such reports emanate from certain districts in Andhra and they are authentic.

On October 25, a police party descended on the backward Godur village in Jagtial taluk in Karimnagar district to teach a "lesson" to farm labor that had resolved to boycott the local arrack shop (Jagtial and Sircilla taluks in Karimnagar

district have been under the Disturbed Areas Act since October 1978).

At the behest of the Rythu Coolie Sangham, the farm labor organization of CPI(ML), farmworkers in Godur and hundreds of other villages in the adjoining districts of Khammam and Warangal stopped buying their evening drinks from the contracted liquor shops to protest against the enhanced rates of the sweet intoxicant.

RCS and allied units, which have been providing a collective leadership to the tribals and laborers for well over a decade gave a Gandhian "boycott" call to habitual drinkers.

[The boycott led to the contractors and the government losing large sums of money. The two-and-a-half-month agitation caused the government to lose over Rs 200 million in excise taxes, according to a report in the Week by G.S.Radhakrishna. This successful agitation is thought to have been the immediate provocation for the government's intensification of police action against Naxalites.]

Disappearing Detenus in Manipur

On December 21, the Imphal bench of the Guahati High Court directed the Indian army authorities in Manipur to produce Khaidem Budha before the court on January 26. This order was passed after the court heard a writ petition by Khaidem Budha's wife, Luithukla Tangkhul.

This is not the first time the court has passed such a ruling. The disappearance of Chandan Chaoba, after his arrest by the army on January 10, 1981, still remains a mystery and to date the army has not produced the missing man. The circumstances surrounding Budha's as well as Chaoba's arrest, their subsequent disappearance and the prevarications of the army about their fate are symptomatic of conditions in Manipur today, especially the army's rule there. The following account is based on a report published in Resistance of January 3.

Khaidem Budha, a 34-year-old teacher-turned-farmer, was arrested by army personnel on November 6, 1983 from his parents' house at Pungdongbam, 12 kms east of Imphal. He had come to visit his parents only days earlier. Budha has not been seen again since.

Two days after Budha's arrest, the army authorities acknowledged that he was indeed in their custody. This was communicated by Brigade Major S.C. Anand of 'M' Sector (HQ) to L. Joychandra, President of CLARHO (Civil Liberties and Human Rights Organization), Imphal. Joychandra had taken up the issue of Budha's arrest with the army authorities at the behest of Budha's relatives. Budha's relatives as well as his acquaintances assert that he had no connection whatsoever with PLA (People's Liberation Army) or any other insurgent group. The Pastor of Chambung village, who was also arrested on November 6, 1983, attested to Budha's innocence under interrogation by the army.

When Budha's younger brother Pishak and his friend Nityai met Brigade Major S.C. Anand at 'M' Sector HQ on November 12 1983, they were told that Budha had been released on November 8, 1983, at Chambung village. However, there was no sign of Budha at Chambung when his wife went there the following day. Contrary to the army's claim that Budha had been handed over to the Chief of

Chambung, Luithukla was given a written statement by the Chief that the army had not handed over Budha to him or anybody else in the village. Pishak and Nityai again met Brigade Major S.C. Anand on November 16, 1983. On being shown the Chambung Chief's written denial and on being asked for proof that Budha had been in fact handed over to the Chief, Major Anand dismissed them with the comment that he would 'check up' again.

Not long after this meeting, the Chief of Chambung was hauled in by the army authorities. According to the Chief, he was asked by the army to retract his written statement and support the army's version that Budha had been released. The Chief refused to comply.

On November 19, 1983, when Pishak and Nityai met the army authorities for the third time, the officers present at the meeting told them that after his release, Budha was seen around the army camp near Chambung village. A few days later the army authorities, however, reportedly informed the state's Deputy Chief Minister, I Tompok Singh, that Budha had run away while he was being taken to locate an underground camp.

The army's final version came on November 26, 1983 when in a letter, Brigade Major S.C. Anand wrote to the CLARHO President that Khaidem Budha had been "called for questioning by the army on 6 and 7 November, 1983, in connection with a report about his anti-national activities" and further that "on both days he was asked to return the next day to clarify out doubts. However, the concerned individual has not returned to the army authorities since November 8, 1983." The letter now claimed that Budha was "at no stage arrested by the army."

Luithukla finally appealed to Chief Minister Rishang Keishing sometime in early last December, but he merely echoed the army's latest version.

Though resigned to never seeing her husband alive again, Luithukla Tangkhul was preparing for a last battle by undertaking an "indefinite fast" at the gate of the Chief Minister's residence in hope that her action would "engender a more humane attitude in the authorities for women ... if not to our husbands."

from Eco. & Pol. Weekly

Police Terror in Andhra

(continued from page 16)

The acts of the police in harassing, arresting, torturing and murdering people through faked encounters must not be viewed as isolated irrational idiosyncrasies of a few police officers or policemen. They are part of an organized attempt on the part of the ruling class to crush any movement that fights for the rights of the oppressed. Class conflict is not an invention of communists—ruling classes have been practicing it for ages.

speedy and effective justice in social disputes.

It is easy to see who the real criminals are and what the real crimes are. The Naxalite movement must be viewed as emerging from and basing itself upon struggles against ghastly social and economic crimes perpetrated ceaselessly against the toiling masses. To turn a blind eye to these crimes and instead brand those who fight for justice as extremists can only distract the attention and misinform those who care to know little about the social reality in these districts.

The acts of the police in harassing, arresting, torturing and murdering people through faked encounters must not be viewed as isolated irrational idiosyncrasies of a few police officers or policemen. They are part of an organized attempt on

the part of the ruling class to crush any movement that fights for the rights of the oppressed. Class conflict is not an invention of communists—ruling classes have been practicing it for ages.

It is in such situations that "extremist" activities occur. There is sporadic violence, though on no massive scale. Police claim that since 1969, "extremists" have committed 34 murders in Khammam district, an average of 2.3 per year. In comparison, there have been 449 killings by the police reported in the state as encounters with extremists, about which civil liberties organizations have investigated and found that in no case was there an exchange of fire. Police officers responsible are rewarded with promotions, never punished. The rulers take good care of their watchdogs.

The tribals in the forests and the laborers support the "extremists." And that is precisely why the police have been unable to "exterminate" them. The ever-exploited are well aware that in their perpetual conflict with those who crush them and sap their vitality and life, the "extremist" is fighting for them and presents the only way out of the lifelong misery to which they are subjected. They owe whatever gains they have registered to the struggles they wage and not to the magnanimity of the well-off.

Organizing Tribals in Maharashtra-Andhra Border Region People's War Group of CPI (ML)

[The following is excerpted from a full-page article in the Sunday Observer, published from Bombay.]

"Khetihar Kranti Zindabad, Peddi Shankar Zindabad" are slogans of Maharashtra's first incipient tribal uprising in the last four decades through the valleys and forests in south Gadchiroli district. But it had not always been so. Formed in August 1982 by bisecting the old Chandrapur district, Gadchiroli comprises the two old talukas of Sironcha and Gadchiroli to the east of the river Wainganga. Teak and bamboo forests cover 73% of the district's 1.5 million hectares. 250,000 tribals form 45% of the sparse 639,000 of the district, which belongs, ethnographically speaking, to the backward central India tribal belt.

Most of Gadchiroli's tribal population is made up of Pradhan Gonds and Raj Gonds along with a small number of Halbas, Kolams and Kawars; the really backward Madia Gonds inhabit the inaccessible Bhamragarh on the eastern periphery. Bastar, further east in MP, Adilabad, southwest in Andhra, and Chandrapur, further west in Maharashtra, are also all inhabited by Gonds.

Till the '70s, this entire backward tract remained relatively untouched by any political organization. Despite the rivers Wainganga, Pranhita, Godavari and Indravati, the tribals struggled on with single-crop subsistence cultivation of rice, jowar, etc. They worked on low wages as subjects of zamindars, cheated by rapacious traders and moneylenders, robbed by forest contractors and bullied by forest department officials.

ANNAS FROM ANDHRA

The first stirrings of militant struggle against centuries-old injustices began three years ago, when the first annas (elder brothers/ Naxalites) came across the border from Adilabad and Karimnagar to take refuge in the Sironcha forest. In a swift response, the government drew blood on November 30, 1980, when a SRP (state reserve police) patrol "encountered" CPI (ML) People's War leader Peddi Shankar and four associates in Moyanbinpeta village on the banks of Pranhita river. Peddi was shot dead though his friends escaped.

Peddi had been on the wanted list ever since he led a major agitation in his home-town, Bellampally, protesting the rape of a miner's wife, Rajeshwari, by a mine official and her subsequent death. The 23-year-old activist of the Radical Youth League in Adilabad had entered Maharashtra only a few months earlier. This first-ever Naxalite encounter killing became a major rallying point for the gathering movement.

Official hopes of having quelled the "red menace" were belied one-and-a-half years of Naxalite propaganda later, by the first mass action at Asaralli to obtain land for cultivation. The Scheduled Tribes Restitution of Land Ordinance had been a virtual dead letter since it was passed in 1974, and few tribals had actually profited from it. Even Additional Commissioner Menon concedes that frequent appeals by zamindars against the tribunal's judgments in favor of tribals had subverted the implementation of the act. The act itself has been challenged in the High Court.

But in Asaralli and elsewhere, the tribals were to lose their land not only to nontribals but also to the forest department. Finally, in March 1982, agricultural labor families cleared forest land for cultivation. At first one acre was cleared; then another 14 acres of government forest land were cleared, but the self-help went no further. The forest department stopped them with the assurance of pattas for five acres each. But the promised land never came; what did come was the police and they were all herded into jail. A police camp was then set up in the village.

HIGHER WAGES FOR LEAF-PICKING

In the summer of 1982, CPI (ML) activists launched another agitation from Asaralli, this time demanding higher wages for picking tendu leaves used to make bids. Almost all villagers - tribal and non-tribal, landed and landless, avail of the brief picking season that lasts barely six weeks in April and May. The forest department fixes pickers' wages and auctions of units of the forest to contractors who bid for royalty to be paid for each bundle. The bargaining power of the workers is very strong since the government's revenue and the massive profits of the contractors hinge on this short burst of nimble picking that brooks no delay.

In 1982, the fixed government rate was Rs 5 for every 100 bundles picked and spontaneous and widespread strikes broke out in this area. Some contractors who refused to comply with pickers' demands were threatened and the wages jumped to Rs 8 and 9. With this phenomenal 80% increase, the Naxalites' popularity spread like wildfire. As people in Chandrapur say, the Annas had achieved

ran through the villages of these talukas in April and May. While some contractors just upped and fled in the face of unrest, others around Asaralli and Sironcha paid as much as Rs 12.50, which was twice the declared government rate.

In response to the handbill's exhortation, popular jan panchayats are now coming into existence. The villagers themselves are demanding higher wages from the Forest Development Corporation and the local landowners. The department has been forced to raise men's wages from Rs 4 to Rs 5; and women's wages, from Rs 3 to Rs 4. According to local people, agricultural wages have also gone up from between Rs 2 and 2.50 to Rs 4 and Rs 5.

POLITICAL IMPACT

The concessions have caused deep concern in political and bureaucratic circles. Senior bureaucrats in the state government and the forest department feel that the tendu pickers are being "misled" into demanding higher wages. Wages should not be linked to profitability in the

NAXALITES AT WORK

Most of the Naxalites are from families of poor peasants, laborers and miners, often of the lower castes.

Peddi Shankar was a miner's son who had studied up to intermediate and earned his living working as a cleaner in a garage. Palle Kanakalah, who was killed on August 30, 1983, in Adilabad, was born in a poor Gond family in Karimnagar. He studied upto the PUC and had become a Naxalite activist.

Carrying a medical kit and literature wherever they go, they move around in dalams (squads). No one knows how many there are; according to rumors, their numbers could be anywhere between 20 and 200. Villagers state quite categorically that "they live and sleep in the forest itself" and not in the villages though they visit to hold meetings. "They eat what we eat if it is offered to them. Nothing special like chicken, eggs, etc. They get angry if we offer them more and say give us what you eat," says one villager.

SELECTIVE VIOLENCE

But everyone, including the police, admit that violence has been extremely selective and reprisals have been few and far between.

The first such incident occurred on the night of October 3, 1982. The house of Satyanarayan Raju, a school teacher at Ankisa, was raided by a group of people who chopped off his right hand. It is said that this action was taken to warn all

police informers and put an end to Raju's harassment of the people.

Son of the muni of the erstwhile malguzar of Narapur, Raju owns about 15 acres of land with a tube well; on three acres of this, he cultivates sugarcane. He is notorious in the village as a bully who used to beat his laborers mercilessly. His father is alleged to have cornered 70 acres of government land in nearby villages and sold it bit by bit.

When Raju lay there bleeding that night, no one stepped forward to help him to the hospital for hours. Retorts a villager: "Where were the police and the courts when Raju master beat us?" Following this incident, about 10 villagers, including the sarpanch, were arrested, beaten and charged with attempt to murder under Section 307 of the Indian Penal Code. Raju was shifted to Sironcha with his family and given Rs 10,000 as compensation and a bodyguard.

Apart from this, the only other notable reprisal was the thrashing of a naik tehsildar near Etapalli for having raped a tribal girl. Some notorious forest employees and contractors are also said to have been threatened with a thrashing unless they mend their ways.

The Naxalites are believed to carry guns; but even police reports admit that these have been used only once so far. At Bojarpalli in March 1983, an SRP patrol chanced on a dalam resting near a stream. The activists reportedly fired in the air and escaped.

in one year what other political parties and government had been unable to achieve in 35 years. The movement has now spread to the three talukas of Aheri, Sironcha and Etapalli.

In February 1983, handbills printed in Telugu and Hindi were widely circulated in Sironcha and Aheri tehsils. Entitled "Adivasi Khetihar Majdoor Sangh mein sangathith ho jave," the preamble stated: "In the path of the Naxalbari and Srikakulam peasant struggles, the peasants of Karimnagar, Adilabad, Warangal, Khammam, Dharmapuri are struggling under the leadership of the CPI (ML—People's War). Comrade Peddi Shankar has given his life for the people of Chandrapur." The handbills got a tremendous response.

They called on villagers to demand Rs 14 for every 100 bundles picked and to insist that only local people be appointed as kalledars (in charge of local collections centers) at monthly salaries of Rs 500. Spontaneously again, a ripple of strikes

government sector, which has a common wage structure for all workers, whether they construct roads or pick leaves, they argue.

The villagers have organized themselves into local committees that have become the effective decision-making bodies at the village level - a veritable parallel administration. Money is being levied directly from the contractors who operate in forests where the officials and the police fear to tread. The unrestrained authority of officials, contractors and moneylenders is facing stiff opposition; established political parties have lost their grip.

Above everything else it is this growing political influence of the "Naxalite menace" that is worrying the state. There have been repeated demands from Congress(I) MLAs and MPs and even opposition leaders like Datta Meghe to strengthen police presence and suppress Naxalite activity. According to senior police officials, the Naxalites are "extre-

mely dangerous" and "subversive antisocial elements," who are goading people into making unreasonable demands. These are violent elements creating a law and order problem by instigating people to break the law. Such politics is "harmful to very fabric of our society" and must be suppressed by the use of force, they stress.

POLICE REPRESSION

For the the last four years, the police of Andhra and Maharashtra have coordinated efforts to weed out this "subversive evil." That is how Peddi Shankar was killed. The SRP is conspicuous all along the route from Allapalli in the north, where the thick forests that span almost the whole district begin, through Etapalli and Sironcha in the south upto Asaralli. In an atmosphere of palpable tension, the police gets into buses at stops to check passengers. The area is as if under siege and every newcomer is viewed with suspicion; and urban-looking young, are suspected of being Naxalites.

And yet, though district collector R. Gaikwad admitted at a press conference last year that almost Rs 100,000 was being spent each day on policing the district, there have been no arrests after Peddi Shankar [till January 1984 at least]. It is a measure of the indiscriminate methods and terror tactics of a frustrated police that in May 1983, they arrested 13 students who had come from Bombay and Hyderabad as part of their annual "Go to the Village" campaign.

POPULAR SUPPORT

The people on the other hand have been the chief source of protection for the Naxalites and evidently their world view yields a different conception of social evils. The elan of the movement is quite obvious. In tea stalls, buses and shops at Allapalli, the conversation quickly veers towards the Naxalites, their activities and aims. There is a mixture of admiration, awe and interest in the talk about them.

In Tekda, Motla, Somanapalli, Asaralli and Amaraji, the villagers are hesitant to speak about the Naxalites; initially they deny any knowledge of them. Only after repeated assurances that we are friends not foes, do they gradually open up.

"They do good for the people," says Hanif, a 17-year-old boy with a shine in his eyes. Hanif works in a teak nursery of the forest corporation. "Then why are the police after them? Surely they must have done something bad," we ask. Shaking his head perplexedly, he replies: "The corporation wallas are all badmash. They take money from us for everything; even to get work in building or road construction, we have to bribe these fellows."

"Do the Naxalites come to your village?" we ask. He nods cheerfully: "They come in the evenings and nights. Sometimes only one or two come. They sing songs in Telugu and Gondi; they ask us about our troubles and problems; they explain how we should organize ourselves; they talk to us about our rights to the forest and its produce; they talk about the need to oppose our exploitation by the forest department and contractors; they also talk about the land wrongfully seized by sahuks and the forest department."

The villagers are emphatic about the change that has come into their lives as a result of activities initiated by these activists. They talk falteringly about the SRP's nightly raids on their houses; many have been detained and beaten at the police station to reveal the whereabouts of the Naxalites. They recount their struggles with enthusiasm: their attempts to clear and cultivate land; and their tendu leaf movement. "The Annas are behind all this," they say proudly.

Continuing Trafficking in Women

ASHWINI SARIN

The sale of women is continuing unabated in Dholpur-Morena-Agra triangle.

Three years ago I bought Kamala to expose the sordid flesh trade going on in the area. The scenario, like the tough terrain, has not changed a bit.

There are odd police raids on the clusters of Kanjar and Bedia huts from where the business is conducted, apparently with police and political patronage and official apathy. In Dholpur and Morena areas the Kanjars' and Bedias' votes are in significant number.

Despite the vehement assertions of the Dholpur District Superintendent of Police, Bhaskar Chatterjee, 29, that there was no such thing as sale of women, a visit to Pachgaon in Dholpur on Sunday, April 22, was as exciting and frightening as the one I had three years ago.

Everything was the same in Pachgaon except for the fact that I was not alone this time. A plainclothes Morena police inspector carrying a revolver accompanied me along with M.K. Tammana, a local journalist. I was not a Thakur scouting for a girl but a Bombay film producer looking for exciting spots to shoot a film.

The activities of Pachgaon, the dominant village of the area, are supplemented by Kanjars and Bedias of a dozen other villages in parts of Dholpur adjoining MP. Rarely is any case of kidnapping reported from these villages. Girls are brought from outside and kept in hide-outs in dozen odd villages.

In Dholpur district, according to Bhaskar Chatterjee, only four girls were saved from being sold from 1980 to this March. However, sources say that the police had recovered eight girls in one month from the Raja Khera area about two years ago, including Asha Mangol, 17, of Calcutta; Kaliamma, 16, of Tamil Nadu; and Madhu Gupta, 19, of Mainpuri in UP. Gupta had been brought to Dholpur by a UP police constable who sold her for Rs 5,000. She was recovered when a gujjar of Basai Dang village was trying to sell her for Rs 12,000.

The indifferent attitude of the Rajasthan government is illustrated by the government's inaction to set up a special squad and police outposts in Kanjar and Bedia villages. These measures were recommended by DIG Krishan Lal Meena, who had been asked to look into the matter after the earlier Indian Express expose.

In adjoining Morena, from where most buyers come, the trade has been going on except for the fact that the notaries who used to certify the agreement on behalf of the women have increased their fees and are a little cautious. A notary in Morena collectorate told me that the risk had now increased and the senior police officials were strict. The district police chief, Asif Ibrahim, 33, said that he was trying to evolve a procedure by which the agreements could be certified by magistrates alone and if possible the woman's photograph was also affixed to the agreement. He says that the police knew that the notary agreement was a farce because the buyers obtained such agreements to establish that the women were living with them of their own will.

The Morena police action against the traffickers continues but the locals say that for every case, almost 100 cases go unnoticed. Only two months back, the police recovered two girls - Laxmi, 20, of Chakradharpur in Bihar, and Sheela, 19, of West Bengal - after they had been sold to Bhaggo, the portly madame who runs a brothel in Reshampura near Gwalior.

USHA FROM DELHI

The story of the rescue of Usha, 20, of Delhi's Seelampur sheds light on the operation. She said in her statement:

"I had gone to Nauchandi [fair in Meerut on March 29] and my husband who was with me had gone somewhere

after asking me to wait near a grocery store. A woman approached me and said she was my mausya saas (maternal mother-in-law) and that my husband was calling me some distance away. I do not know what happened to me. I was taken by bus to Agra and then to Vitt Ka Pura by that woman and two men. I was kept in a room where Ghausu Bedia came at night and told me that I should tell everyone that Ghausu was my brother-in-law."

Usha, however, escaped when she went to the fields to ease herself in the evening in the company of other Bedia women. She walked over to the fields of Jasram, 50, and begged to be saved. Jasram, both of whose legs are deformed, assured her she was safe. "I have four granddaughters and do not mind having a fifth one," he said.

The village panchayat met and resolved to save the girl. Two youths were sent to Morena as the villagers did not trust the local police. But that night, on March 30, the Bedias of Vitt Ka Pura raided Chand Ka Pura, snapped the telephone, and there was exchange of fire.

Next day, the Additional Police Superintendent, Anand Kumar Singh, arrived from Morena and took Usha. She has since been sent to her home in Bulandshahi district. "Jasram was the happiest man when he was told that Usha had gone safely to her house," Singh says.

Usha was fortunate but there are hundreds of others who live in the area and are forced to change husband and village with change of season.

BELA FROM BANKURA

She says she is 20, but does not know her exact age. Scars of time have made her look at least ten years older. She is Bela Devi Rakhit. She left her home in Bankura district of West Bengal. Her journey to the north was the beginning of her ordeal in the flesh trade from where she would probably never be able to free herself.

"I have no one back home," she said sobbing when I met her in Mishron Ka Pura village, 20 km east of Morena. "All I now want is a job and two square meals a day. I have been ruined. My child has been killed. Where do I go? I have seen enough of life."

Bela was forced into the world of flesh trade in 1979 when she left Bankura for Panipat. Within a few months she was thrown out by the good samaritan who had brought her to Panipat.

After spending some time in Delhi and other places, Bela says, she finally found herself in Mathura. "By then I had given birth to a son and was staying in a temple," she says, "when one Laxman of Khera village in Mathura area offered to keep me and my son with him."

"Laxman said he had 60 bighas of land and would keep me and my son happy," she says. "But things turned sour within a few days when I discovered that Laxman was looking for buyers."

One day Bela found herself in the company of two youths - Ramji Lal and Ram Autar of Raja Khera in Dholpur area. "I was told that I had been sold for Rs 4,000," she recalls, "and also about dire consequences if I spoke to anyone during the bus journey."

"I knew these two persons would not keep me. I could sense these things by the goings on there. I was being shown to different people at odd hours at isolated spots outside the village. I was taken out only at night and was made to walk long distances in jungle going from village to village."

She remembers that her "owners" had been demanding a huge price. "At times they asked for Rs 10,000. My son was an

obstacle in fetching a high price but the search continued."

And, finally, it was the fateful January night this year. "It was winter and Thursday and we - myself, my son, Ramjilal and Ram Autar - were walking down a kutchra village road through grown up crops. It was somewhere in the Ambah area." She starts crying. "On that Thursday of the first month, my son was suddenly snatched from me while we were walking down the pagdandi. One of them held a long knife pointed at me and within minutes my son was killed."

Within two days she reached her new home in Mishron Ka Pura. Bela's new "owner" was Ram Prakash, 22, son of Baij Nath. "He had paid Rs 8,000 for me," Bela says although Ram Prakash's family denies that she had been purchased. "Agreement kiya hai," says his younger sister.

Morena police got the news about her sale through an anonymous letter. The letter led to the recovery of a highly decomposed and animal-eaten head of Bela's son. Ram Autar and Ramji Lal are now in Morena jail.

Ram Prakash, his father and other villagers ran away when we reached Mishron Ka Pura on April 23. After a lot of persuasion, Bela came out of the pucca house on the outskirts of the Brahmin-dominated village.

She told us that Ram Prakash's family had been threatened with a community boycott if she was kept in the family.

According to some village youths, Ram Prakash had been searching for a buyer to dispose of Bela following the boycott threat. Asked if she would like to live with him, she says: "I will but he does not want to keep me. I do not know why he had paid so much money for me. Ram Prakash's sister's marriage is due and my presence in the house will affect the marriage."

Mishron Ka Pura panchayat had already held a meeting and Baij Nath's family was warned. Their anger is not over the purchase of a woman but over the fact that a woman whose caste was unknown had been brought into a Brahmin family. "We cannot allow the pollution of our caste," an elderly villager said.

All attempts by the police to persuade the villagers to let Ram Prakash keep Bela had failed. Even the ASP, Anand Kumar Singh, has visited the village but in vain.

In police records the Bela case will be recorded as "Bela alias Usha of West Bengal was reported to have been purchased by Ram Prakash of Mishron Ka Pura for Rs 8,000. Inquiries showed that the woman has been staying with Ram Prakash on her own will. The case has been filed."

RULING PARTY INVOLVED

It would be a travesty of truth to say that the flesh trade in parts of UP, Rajasthan and MP is an activity in which criminals and some communities are engaged.

Rajasthan officials seldom write to their government about the magnitude of the problem and the suspected involvement of political bigwigs of the ruling party. "Dholpur is governed by two-and-a-half persons," said Capt. Hari Singh, 82-year-old ADC to the former ruler of Dholpur. He was referring to the Rajasthan Minister of State for Home Affairs, Pradyuman Singh; the Cong-I MLA and former minister, Banwari Lal Sharma; and Salig Ram Gujar, a former MLA.

The fact is that the goings on in the Dholpur area are known to the central government since the sixties. Central intelligence agencies had inquired into the matter following the publication of a re-



(From left) Jehan Ara, Saimoona and Zahida: flesh trade victims

port in a section of the Pakistani press in July 1961 on the sale of women in the area. Nehru had asked the agencies to investigate.

According to sources, the agencies had confirmed the wide-scale trafficking in women. They had reported that the trade enjoyed the patronage of a number of local political leaders. Pachgaon is in fact the ancestral village of Banwari Lal Sharma.

There have been cases when powerful men in Delhi intervened as the police mounted action against those involved in the flesh trade and other criminal activities in the area.

The Rajasthan officials keep quiet over goings-on as they fear reprisal. Officials of the neighboring Morena district of MP have been pressuring their state government to raise the matter with the Rajasthan government. The Morena police recently registered a case against the wife and son of Salig Ram when a police party was allegedly attacked in Dholpur.

The secret report of the Chambal Divisional Commissioner, after publication of the reports on Kamala, specifically noted: "Trafficking in Dholpur's Pachgaon and Agra's Basai is a matter of common knowledge as it has been going on for long. But some residents of Dholpur have prospered solely due to their associations with this trade and have secured important positions in [Rajasthan] state politics."

The report also refers to criminals enjoying political patronage: "Bahadur Chamar of Bamore is engaged in this trade. There is a police case against him in Noorbad for kidnapping a girl, Saroj, on February 16, 1979. A proposal for his detention under the National Security Act has been prepared. Babu Lal Solanki [MP from Morena] had suggested his immediate arrest but the state Home department has given oral instructions to stay the action against him for the time being. This case is sufficient to prove how criminals managed to secure importance in politics."

WHY IS TRAFFIC BASED IN CHAMBAL?

On the average, there are only four women for every six men in this area. For this reason, women are sold like a scarce commodity. In Morena, there are 835 females for 1,000 males and in adjoining Bhind there are 832 females for 1,000 males. In Bharatpur and Dholpur, the situation is similar.

According to demographers, the number of women in the Chambal area has been registering a downward trend. Among some communities like Gujars, Thakurs and Brahmins, the situation is grim.

The Chambal Divisional Commissioner also noted that in the olden days, some Thakurs and Gujars used to kill their daughters at the time of birth. "This practice was prevalent in some areas of Rajasthan till recently. There are some villages that have not witnessed a girl's baraat for about 200 years."

(excerpted from the Indian Express)

Sad Story of Textile Workers in Ahmedabad

HARISH KHARE

Not many outside Gujarat may be familiar with—and still fewer may even care to know—names like Marsden, Monogram, Bhalakia, Aryodaya, Prasad, Sahyog and Tarun Commercial. These are the 'closed' textile mills of Ahmedabad. Till yesterday these mills were a source of wealth to the owners and of employment to Ismailbhai Rasool, Ganpathbai, Kalidas, Prem Das, Dineshbhai, Mayudin Chand, Maniben, Chaganbhai, Manendrabhai and thousands and thousands of other workers.

Today these workers are flirting with near-poverty. Till yesterday they were proud, productive hands, respectable and valued citizens, respected and honored members of their communities; today they are idle, made useless, and still worse, forced into a life of misery, humiliation and degradation.

Thirty thousand textile workers find themselves helpless against an array of formidable forces—a callous ownership that long ago diverted profits from these mills to more lucrative capital-intensive industries; a sole representative union, the Textile Labor Association, presided over by a near-senile but righteously self-serving leadership; an indifferent state government mired in petty factional disputes; and a Central Government that just does not see the enormity of the problem because, for better or worse, the ingrained conservatism of Ahmedabad has not yet produced a Datta Samant. And because often families would work in the same mill, one closed mill could mean loss of employment for all the earning hands. Instant family unemployment.

Having faithfully worked for decades in the mills, the workers are at a loss to understand how the owners can just let the workers die a slow death. Maniben, a veteran of 30 years in weaving section of a mill, says: "There is new machinery in my mill, but the owners just don't want to run the mill. The Seth has the money, and does not want to sell the mill either." Adds another worker: "The Government is in conspiracy with the mill owners. The industrialists can sit at home, after garnering all the profits. Only there is no protection for those like us who sweated for years."

But what about the mill owners' claim that they could not possibly be expected to operate units that have become losing propositions? "But mill owners never show their true earnings. Who knows whether the mills are really losing money or they have diverted our profits to other industries. For 62 years, my mill earned profit and then there were losses for three, four years; so you just close down the mill? A mill just can't die like that. What about earlier profits?" asks Danabhai. He began working in a textile mill 23 years ago at the age of 17. "I am just too young to just sit at home; and too old to find a new job."

Danabhai and other textile workers ask angrily: "How could some mills progress, while others have lost money? Why can't the government examine whether

the losing mills were badly managed? We know how the second and third generation of owners have frivolously wasted away the wealth, a wealth for which we all worked hard." Others assert that "at least we should get back our Provident Fund and gratuity, etc. If the owners say they have no money, sell the mills and estate." This from a group that always took pride in its feudal fealty to the owners.

All workers have reached an unhappy conclusion that "all textile mills, working and closed, should be nationalized." But they wonder aloud whether the government would listen to them. Their expectations ran high during Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the city but the plight of the unemployed remains unchanged. Remarked one worker: "Perhaps they should hold a Congress-I session in Ahmedabad." Another one chimes in: "The Government talks of socialism, but is not interested in taking the mill over."

What about the role of the trade union leadership, the Textile Labor Association? Thoroughly exploiting its status as the sole representative union under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, the Majdoor Mahajan preached the virtues of industrial peace and industrial production, and in the process lost its will to fight for the workers. And, though the TLA leadership spouts Gandhi's name and Gandhian philosophy, the workers have come to believe that their union has become most un-Gandhian because the leaders are afflicted with the moral and physical cowardice. "The Union leadership has colluded with the management in inflicting this misery upon us. Mill workers are not allowed to raise their voice. If a worker proves difficult, the TLA bosses would just phone the worker's mill and tell the management to 'fix' him."

Some workers even go further and accuse the union leadership of being anti-worker. They point out how the leaders used to come to 'mill lines' on cycles whereas today they live in big bungalows and their children study abroad while the workers continue to live in crowded chalis.

Why can't the workers get rid of this ineffective and corrupt leadership? "We are not like Bombay workers. They have militant traditions. Our TLA has indoctrinated us to keep peace and keep production up. Both management and TLA would not permit us to join other unions. But this forced subscription should be stopped. The Bombay Industrial Relations Act must be scrapped."

Above all, the textile workers feel let down by the political class. "No politician has thought it necessary to visit our area. When we go to them, they know how to give correct answers, how to mollify and evade and how to pander to a worker's greatest weakness—a promise of re-opening of the closed mills. The leaders, political and labor, have failed us. We'll avenge, we'll make them unemployed."

Based on a report in the Hindustan Times

Bhagat Singh's Sister Passes Away

new their pledge to fight for the ideals for which her brother and his comrades had sacrificed their lives.

Recently, disturbed by the communal tension and hatred growing in Punjab, Kaur made an appeal for peace and harmony in Punjab. "A chill passes through my spine to learn how the devil of inhumanity and communal fanaticism feeds itself on the blood of persons, honor of women and hard-earned belongings of people." Kaur added, "to meet the challenge of the devil, we need unity, determination, courage and strength of all

those who cherish the values and do not think any sacrifice too big to preserve these under the prevailing situation. I appeal to you all to come forward and unite as a defense force against the virus which threatens unity."



Parity Issue in Dock Strike

RADHA IYER

The port and dock workers' strike earlier this year turned out to be one of the longest the country has seen. The strike has brought into the open the paradoxes of the parity principle, which has come to occupy a central place in wage negotiations in the government and public sector undertakings. The All-India Port and Dock Workers' Federation and its president, S.R. Kulkarni, have repeatedly asserted that their fight is for a principle — that of parity with wages in the steel industry.

The demand for parity has become the chief mode of obtaining wage increases in the public sector. Thus at one time state government employees asked for parity with central government employees. Later, central government employees began to ask for parity with employees of some state governments. Employees of public sector companies have asked for parity with BHEL, and so on until somewhere along the line somebody asks for parity with the private sector.

Parity is not easy to determine. What does parity with the steelworkers mean? Is it parity in respect of the overall gross wage? Is it parity in respect of each component of wage? And what if parity with steelworkers leads to, or maintains, disparities with other more immediate and visible comparable categories like officers of ports, employees of shipping companies, etc.? And what is the basis for comparing port and dock workers with steelworkers? Over 60% of steelworkers are skilled or artisans while over 60% of dock workers are unskilled. Working conditions differ enormously as well.

The government early on agreed to parity in terms of the gross wages and the basic wage. The minimum lowest wage for an unskilled dockworker was around Rs 835 whereas that of the steelworker was Rs 941. This difference of Rs 106 was covered by the government's initial offer. The unions however demanded parity not only in terms of gross wage but in terms of the different components. The demand for house rent allowance (HRA) and city compensatory allowance (CCA) became important. This would add another Rs 50-60 to the total wage. This would bring about parity in certain components of wages but disturb it in respect of the gross wage.

The government, in a new move, decided on wage increases for officers before settling the unions' demand. This meant it unilaterally imposed an upper ceiling on the workers' negotiations. The

officers were paid HRA and CCA ranging from 17% plus 6% of the revised wage to 8% plus CCA in smaller ports. The unions want the same for the workers. The government's answer has been that it would upset the difference between officers and workers.

The other side of the parity question is: In spite of the parity principle being accepted, why is it that the wage increases do not amount to much? In all this parity debate, the basic rationale of any wage negotiations seems to have been forgotten. For example, there is need for HRA because housing in big cities has become impossibly expensive; the CCA is similarly necessary to cover the additional cost of living in big cities. Wages have to be revised because inflation has skyrocketed and because the skills required from workers have undergone great changes due to increasing mechanization. Objective criteria such as minimum wage, fair wage and living wage can be derived on the basis of the wage required for a working class family to live, though time and again wage boards have said in so many words that it was not possible to award the wages necessary for a minimum standard of living. There is also the concept of industry-cum-region parity. All this has been given a go-by. The trend now is to negotiate the total wage burden first and then decide how to distribute it.

In the case of dock workers, despite their bargaining power, despite large increases in private shipping companies (a peon in the Shipping Corporation earns around Rs 1600 a month), and despite having an industry-wide union, wage increases of dock and port workers have been ad hoc and have resulted in erosion of real wages. Over a period of nearly twenty years since 1964, their wages have more than doubled in gross terms. In real terms, however, since the rupee has gone down to 13p with 1960 as the base year, the purchasing power of the dock workers' minimum wage is about Rs 100 by 1960 standards.

The unions talk of principles being the main thing, but the principle of parity is no principle at all. Though attached to political parties, the union leadership has been unable to lead a political movement to link wages with inflation and with a fair or living wage. The objective of wage negotiations, of securing a living wage, seems to have been forgotten in the mire of other calculations.

(excerpted from E & PW)

Ministry Report: Child Labor a Harsh Reality

The Union Labor Ministry's annual report for 1983-84 says that the government accepts child labor as a harsh reality and it will not be feasible nor opportune to prevent children from working in the present stage of economic development. The report added that children need improvement in their working conditions as well as facilities of education, extra nutrition and health care. According to the report, despite the provisions of restrictive labor laws, the practice continues unabated because exploitation of children is of financial advantage to employers and an economic compulsion to the parents. Instead of being in school, child laborers work under adverse conditions that stifle their physical as well as mental development.

Over the last two years, there have been many investigative reports done by Peoples Union for Civil Liberties activists and others on the incidence of child labor in many parts of India including the match factories and textile industry Sivakasi in Tamil Nadu, carpet-weaving industry in Varanasi-Bhadohi-Mirzapur belt in UP, glass and bangle factories of Ferozabad also in UP.

Strength of Various Trade Unions

According to the figures released by the government on May 6, the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) has the largest membership of 2,236,000 followed by the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), which has 1,211,000 members. The figures reported by the government are those of verified membership as on Dec. 31, 1980, conducted under the supervision of Chief Labor Commissioner PD Shenoy. According to the report, All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) and Center of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) did not participate in the verification process.

The strength of other organizations are: Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) 735,000; United Trade Union Congress (UTUC) 621,000; National Labor Organizations (NLO) 246,000; National Front of Indian Trade Unions (NFITU) 84,123; United Trade Union Congress (UTUC) 35,384, and Trade Union Congress (TUCC) 14,570. Based on the records of the register of trade unions, AITUC had a membership of 344,000, where as CITU had 331,000 members.

Letter from Coalfield:

Fire Underground

Ranjan Ghosh

About a 6 km arduous journey from Dhanbad railway station along Dhanbad Katras Road will lead you to Kenduadih Rajput Basti—a misnomer in the sense that the settlement is mostly inhabited by cobblers, potters and others artisans with very few Rajputs. A cluster of some 150-odd households surrounded by pale grey undulating terrain with scarce vegetation is a typical coalfield village whose appearance will convince you that this is an abode of destitutes. On November 19, while it was raining heavily, a shriek from Ramswarup's wife broke the silence at noon. Panicked men and women rushed out of their hutments and saw steam and smoke gushing out of the abandoned incline mouth only a few yards away from their dwellings.

The incline was the second emergency outlet of the erstwhile Kenduadih 1/13 pit owned by East India Coal Company. The company during their regime wanted to exploit the coal deposits just under Kenduadih busti, but the villagers, apprehending subsidence of land, resisted it. Land reclamation which is a statutory part of mining operations in civilized countries, is seldom carried out in India. In this context the resistance offered by the villagers was perfectly reasonable. In any case, because of strong opposition, East India Coal Company had to abandon this portion of the mine.

After nationalization of coal mines in 1971, this area came under the jurisdiction of Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (BCCL)—a subsidiary of Coal India Limited (CIL)—a government of India undertaking. Since then new coal faces have been opened, big and costly machinery was brought, production of coal was increased, but like thousands of such half done mines scattered all over the Jharia Coal belt, the incline outlets of Kenduadih 5/13 pit were left untouched. The coal seams along with the worn-out wooden props, once used for supporting the roof of underground mine galleries, were exposed to atmospheric oxygen for a long time. Besides, wild bushes were allowed to grow freely around the incline mouths. The situation was thus ripe and one day the coal mine actually caught fire.

But what happened to the peoples of Kenduadih? By 6 pm that day, the situation became horrifying. Roaring flames as high as 20 ft were leaping out of the incline mouth threatening to engulf many houses. Till then no BCCL officer turned up though they were informed time and again. Around midnight, two bulldozers along with a contingent of police were sent for rescue. Rescue it was indeed! The incline mouth had to be blocked to extinguish the fire. So they started bulldozing everything including several huts near by. The weeping women and children were dragged out of their huts by the police. Bewildered villagers, when they approached the management, were told that their huts were unauthorized constructions on BCCL's land inherited from East India Coal Company.

Actually in 1911, the company had taken several acres of land from the then Rajput landlord of Kenduadih on 30 years lease. After the expiry of the lease, the land was taken back by the landlord and ryots were settled on it. The land revenue receipts and other documents in the possession of the villagers were shown to the management but to no avail. By that time, huts of Ramswarup Pandit and four others had already been demolished. Ultimately the villagers lay down before the onrushing bulldozers to prevent the rest of the huts from being raged to the ground. The bulldozers were withdrawn after a while since the flaming incline mouth was temporarily sealed off, though the fire inside the mine was not totally extinguished. Even now the abnormally high ground temperature is evidence of underground fire.

The story is nothing new in the Jharia coal belt. More than 50 acres of paddy land in Ekra Harijan basti had turned barren due to underground fire. Somra Chamar of Ekra had to abandon his dwelling as gaping cracks appeared on the floor emitting smoke and steam. The milkmen and the petty shopkeepers of Karkend Bazar have been served notices to vacate their dwellings for the same reason. Hundreds of such cases can be cited. On your way from Jharia to Sindri or from Phuluritand to Bagmara, the expanse of smouldering terrain on both sides of the road would unfold the gravity of the problem posed by underground fire. Or from a Katras-bound evening train you can notice the crimson glow coming out of the numerous con earth, only 50 yards away from Bansjora railway station. When it rains, the smell of noxious gases will suffocate you as it did the child of Biseswar Das Sindria, who narrowly escaped death.

According to the experts of Central Mines Research Station (CMRS), Dhanbad, as many as 120 cases of underground fire have been detected in 90 collieries of the Jharia field, 70 of them still active. An official report of Central Mine Planning and Design Institute (CMPDI), Ranchi, states that at least 33 million tons of top-grade coking coal have been lost through underground fire in Jharia and another 50 million tons of coal are blocked under the fire. Of course this is only a rough estimate. Fire has already engulfed several acres of arable land and some important highways. Besides, it threatens a number of railway tracks and important buildings, factories, etc. But there is greater danger ahead. Underground fire has seriously weakened the beds of several streams and rivulets meandering through the Jharia coal belt. These river beds might subside at any moment flooding the adjacent active mines. Another Chaasnala of Hariladih cannot be ruled out. Finally, the extent of environmental pollution caused by the restrictive burning of this huge amount of coal can only be guessed at. Till now the subject is a matter of concern for a handful of experts only and no data are available for public consumption.

Coal seams if they come in contact with atmospheric oxygen, can catch fire even at ordinary temperatures because of spontaneous oxidation. Working in most of the Jharia mines is limited to shallow depths where a number of thick contiguous seams are mined in the board and pillar system. In this process large quantities of coal remain unmined. When due to lack of proper support of premature collapse, the surface subsidence leads to cracks, the free entry of air into the so called sealed-off areas can ignite the left-out coal below. Other factors which, according to the experts, have contributed to the outbreak of fire are burning of "Bon Tulsi," a kind of wild plant, in the subsid- ed areas or near mine outlets, dumping of hot boiler ash here and there and illicit distillation of liquor in abandoned mines. It is quite clear therefore that only strict supervision and care can prevent the outbreak of fire in the coal mines. In fact the Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS), Dhanbad, had long ago formulated certain precautionary measures to prevent and control underground mine fire. These measures were either inadequate or unimplemented by the earlier private owners of coal mines. Because most of the fires in Jharia coalfield are of quite remote origin, the mine owners expanded their operations unabashedly. After the nationalization of coal mines, the control and supervision of DGMS over the mine management have further slackened since the managers are also "Sarkari Naukar" (government servant) now. Besides, the DGMS itself is an ailing organization today. In a memorandum submitted to the Government, the staff of DGMS complained that not even 1% of

(continued on page 23)

CISF in the Coalfields

Mukta Das

Last year the Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL), a subsidiary of Coal India, incurred a loss of about Rs 1 billion. The ECL authority with all the resources at its disposal has been trying hard to convince public opinion that the loss was due to the reckless attitude of the coalminers. And its prescription for the ailment is to bring in the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) to preserve peace and order. It sounds as if CISF wields a magic wand that can cure all the ills of the industry overnight.

In a recent statement MS Gujral, Chairman of Coal India, said that last year Coal India had raised some 40 million tons of coal for which no regular accounts were available. Even without taking into account the recent price hike, the price of 40 million tons of coal is Rs 4,836 billion. Where did this colossal amount go? It found its way into the pockets of Coal India officers and the mafia. And ECL being a major subsidiary of Coal India, the ill-gotten money in this region might well have been substantially above Rs 1 billion.

The other side of the story is the phenomenal growth in the number of trading agencies connected with the coal industry. The assets of these agencies are indeed growing enormously. One contractor's firm of Asansol, after starting from nought a few years ago, now owns a large number of sophisticated excavator machines dumpers, etc. There are many other similar concerns. While the industry suffers huge losses, these firms are flourishing. The relation between these contractors and the officers of ECL is more than that between good neighbors. They are partners and friends in officer's clubs, public ceremonies such as Independence Day and Gandhi Birth Day Celebrations and sports meets. They constitute the dominant class in this region and control its public life.

The production plan of the ECL authorities often undergoes abrupt changes. They would put emphasis on deep mining and in order to implement it, order purchase of machinery from domestic as well as foreign sources. Overnight the plan is changed and the purchased machines remain unutilized and dumped while their price is paid in regular instalments. Now everywhere in the coalfields, Polish experts are seen roaming about and persuading the coalfield officers for buying their own technology and machines. In the area under the jurisdiction of the Bharat Coking Coal Limited, Sudamdih, Munidih, and other coalfields provide examples of the failure of these experts.

A common picture in the Eastern Coalfields region is the domination of the civic life of the working class by thugs and money lenders. Moneylenders are there to snatch money from the workers at the payment counters. Any type of protest is suppressed by the clique of moneylenders and goondas, and cases are

not uncommon when workers have been murdered by the thugs for having dared to protest. Heavy workload coupled with extraordinary exploitation is gradually eroding the life of workers causing a high degree of absenteeism in the coalfields.

In other public sector industries like steel, heavy engineering and power CISF was posted long ago. It is a common complaint of the steel workers that good quality steel is regularly taken out of factory premises in the name of dumping rubbish. Such is the case with precious machine parts and other instruments. The Industrial Security Force feels secure enough to loot the industry in various devious ways.

The deployment of CISF in the Eastern Coalfields region is a relatively recent phenomenon. From the very beginning, CISF unleashed a reign of terror in the area on the workers and the civil population. In last October, CISM ruthlessly beat the workers of the Khottadihi Colliery of Pandabeswar. This provoked a strike among the miners which lasted 8 days. Harassment of workers continues. Even during working hours, CISF personnel enter the colliery premises and threaten unarmed workers. This has seriously aggrieved the workers and in many coalmines serious trouble has erupted.

Another instance of the CISF terror was seen on December 20, when some retrenched contract laborers going in a procession to register their protest before the management of the Jhanjhra project of ECL, CISF made a brutal lathi-charge on the workers and dispersed them. On the 22nd, the contractors and CISF jointly beat the workers at Mohanpur Colliery area during working hours in order to teach the workers a lesson for protesting against the refusal of the contractors to pay according to the Wages Act.

In this way, the CISF has come to occupy by the position previously held by the combination of the West Bengal State Police and thugs. The Central Government has empowered CISF to arrest anybody for 'causing damage' to the industry without requiring a warrant or the order of a magistrate. The tricolor trade unions have extended unequivocal and clear support of the authority in its deployment of CISF. Other trade unions have protested formally. Yet, curiously enough, they feast with the authorities in the joint consultative committee while the steamroller of repression continues.

The main political force which has been singled out for attack are of course the Naxalites. CPI(M-L) cadres are opposing corrupt practices, acts of imperial penetration and the repression let loose by thugs, moneylenders and CISF. Arrest and torture of them combined with resistance from the workers, are now common place.

from Frontier

INDIAN PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION IN NORTH AMERICA

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Secretary: Dr. Shree Mulay, Montreal
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London Center for Multicultural Education

JAGDISH S. GUNDARA

I would like to tell you about our Centre for Multicultural Education at the University of London Institute of Education.

The Centre has been in operation since October 1979. It is not attached to any single department but works with them to design and implement multicultural practices. The Centre is particularly interested in developing comparative work in education for multicultural society in conjunction with overseas scholars and would work jointly with various departments.

Services are provided for teacher training and courses for education administrators, advisers, inspectors and teachers. The Centre holds lectures and through its Centre Research Seminars, it facilitates the exchange of views on education for a multicultural society and issues of race, sexism and education.

LECTURES ON RACISM

A recently concluded series of lectures dealt with the History of Racism. Organized jointly with the Africa Centre, the series featured C.L.R. James on "History of Racism in Britain: A Personal View," Christopher Frye on "History of Racism: An Academic Overview," Ann Dummett on "The Development of Institutional Racism in Britain," Amon Saba Sakaana on "Racism and Culture in the UK," Professor Stephen Rose on "Scientific Ideas and Racism," Darcus Howe on "Race Today in Britain," and Dafydd Elis Thomas, MP, on "Anti-Celtic Racism in Britain."

A conference on the History of Black People in London is being organized for November. Both the conference and the lecture series are funded by the Greater London Council.

CURRICULUM PROJECT

A curriculum development project, funded by the UK Committee for UNESCO and the Health Education Council, is trying to produce cross-curriculum teaching materials for the 16-19 age group. The focus is on child development and relationships within the political, economic, social environment of the cultural diverse society.

URDU IN BRITAIN

A report on the first and second national Urdu conferences, held in 1979 and 1981, is available from the Centre. The book has 168 pages and costs 2.5 pounds.

The book contains articles on Issues of Linguistic Diversity, Ethnic Minority Languages and the Schools, with special reference to Urdu; Teaching Urdu in the State Schools; The Response of the Public Library Service; Urdu Journalism in Britain; and other material pertaining to the two conferences, including resolutions as well as articles from the Times Educational Supplement.

Copies may be obtained by sending payment to

Centre for Multicultural Education
University of London
Institute of Education
Room 425, 20 Bedford Way
London WC1H 0AL

Sociologist to Study Early Indian Immigrants

A sociologist from Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, British Columbia, has received funds from the minister of state for multiculturalism to record the life experiences of early immigrants who came to Canada from the Indian subcontinent.

Dr Hari Sharma says the federally supported project will fill in some historical blanks and undoubtedly reveal interesting perspectives on Canada's social fabric at the turn of the century.

"The history of how people from the Indian subcontinent came to Canada and the role they played in Canada's economic development is not well understood," says Sharma. "Immigration began in 1904 in the form of tiny trickles, four or five people arriving on a liner. By 1908 several thousand people, almost all from Punjab, had arrived and it was at this point that the government began imposing severe immigration restrictions. World War I and the famous Komagata Maru episode of 1914 brought an abrupt halt to Indian immigration."

Sharma says the movement of Indians started again in the 20s and 30s, although immigration policies were unfavorable and the social environment inhospitable, if not outright hostile.

"Before this generation of early im-

migrants passes away, it is important that their experiences of migrating to Canada and of life here be recorded in their own language. As primary data this will constitute an immensely rich and non-replaceable source of historical material, and besides preserving the heritage of a people it will be of use to future generations of researchers."

With the help of a guide and research assistants, Sharma will conduct detailed taped interviews in the language chosen by the interviewees. Later the tapes will be transcribed and translated into English for deposit in the archives at Simon Fraser.

"At this point we need assistance and the cooperation of the public at large in locating eligible people for interviews, namely immigrants from the subcontinent who came to Canada before 1940 and who are still residing here."

Sharma's preliminary investigations reveal that there are at least 125 such people alive and living in B.C. alone, including a few who came as early as 1906.

Information should be relayed directly, in writing, to the following address: Dr Hari P. Sharma
Department of Sociology
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby B.C. V5A 1S6

70% OF BLACK, COLORED AND INDIAN CHILDREN IN SOUTH AFRICA MALNOURISHED

Chatsworth and several other areas of South Africa inhabited by blacks, colored and Indians are among the poorest in the country. Child malnutrition in these areas is as high as 70% of the child population. According to a two-year study, a third of all African, Indian and colored children

under the age of 14 were underweight and stunted for their age. The study also revealed that the nutritional disease and mortality rates among the African, Indian and colored children was up to 30 times more than those of whites.

Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev Commemorated in Alberta

AVTAR S. MANGAT

Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev were remembered at a celebration in Grande Prairie, Alberta, on March 31. There were about twenty items in the program including poems, individual and group songs, speeches and a play. There was also an exhibition.

The most liked and applauded item was the play Inquilab Zindabad. The struggle of the revolutionaries towards independence of the country and the equality of mankind was depicted by enacting the era of Shaheed Bhagat Singh and his companions. The play left a message for the masses to continue to struggle for their fundamental rights. The play was interrupted time and again by rich applause by the audience, particularly during the scene where a British government policeman is convinced to quit his job to join the revolutionaries. The performance by the players was impressive.

The poem Shardhanjali (A Tribute) was very well received. It carried the message of the importance of solidarity through the simile "The strength of a finger is no match for the strength of the fist."



A children's action song, Navin Udari Maar Panchhia, meaning take a new flight, bird, was also very impressive. Seven children and three women took part.

A women's action song describing the greatness and beauty of their land was very colorful. It drew a lot of applause.

An all-female Kavishree item was liked by one and all. It described how Shaheed Bhagat Singh's mother wished her son to feel great about his approaching martyrdom.

Another impressive item of Kavishree was presented by a brother-and-sister team.

Singers from Edmonton presented four inspiring poems. Poems and songs by Shaheed Kartar Singh Sarabha, Sant Ram Udasi, Jaimal Padda, Kashmir Qadir, Jagdish Nahar, and Mangat Ram Pasla were presented.

An exhibition about the lives and contributions of the revolutionaries was organized by the Watnodur group. It included pictures of the revolutionaries and covered the period between Shaheed Kartar Singh Sarabha and Shaheed Udhham Singh.

The program was attended by Rupinder Malhi, son of Bibi Parkash, younger sister of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, and also by Manjit Dhaliwal, son of Bibi Amar Kaur, Shaheed's elder sister. Their message delivered by Rupinder Malhi concluded: "If we want to play a real tribute to the martyrs, we must unite and act on this message of continued struggle to achieve equality for mankind."

The program inspired a lot of local artistic talent including that of our younger generation - the builders of the future.

This program added another thread of the rich historical and cultural heritage of India to the multicultural fabric of Canada.

Admission was free and refreshments were served.

Apartheid Regime in South Africa Bans a Gandhi Monument

Prominent members of South Africa's Indian community and other anti-apartheid leaders, as well as sections of the press have denounced the apartheid regime's ban the collection of funds for the monuments. A Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Trust had been set up recently which hoped to raise \$1.28 million to erect a memorial on a site originally bought by Gandhi when he was in South Africa.

Reacting to the ban, the grand-son-in-law of Gandhi, Mewa Ramgobin said on May 11 that it would appear that Gandhi continued to haunt South Africa from his grave. He also added that it was shocking that a government that does not hesitate to build monuments to the architects of apartheid like Louis Botha has the strength of character to ban fund raising campaigns for Mahatma Gandhi. According to Ramgobin, it was certain that the implementation of Gandhian ideals would shatter apartheid and destroy the present society in South Africa, which is based on naked racism having the respectability and protection of the law.

1400 INDIAN NATIONALS DETAINED AT BRITISH AIRPORTS

According to the Minister of State for External Affairs, AA Rahim, about 1400 Indian nationals were detained at British airports during 1983 by the British authorities. Rahim also added that recent press reports referred to the British Home Office having issued confidential instructions on the procedure to be followed while deciding on passengers entering Britain. However, the details of these instructions were not known.

ERRATUM

The review of Ghar Ghar ki Kahani, printed in our last issue, had a grievous typographical error. We wish to apologize to Vijaya Mulay, the author of the review, as well as to Teesri Duniya and its playwright, Rahul Varma. The last sentence of the review should have read:

"One thing however is certain; there is definitely a talent here that needs to be trained and nurtured."

Leprosy in India

Four Million Suffer from Eradicable Disease

DAYA VARMA

Leprosy is a curable and for sure controllable infectious disease caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*, which belongs to the same group as the tuberculosis-causing bacteria, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. It is not a hereditary disease. However, because of the skin ulcerations and deformities resulting from uncontrolled leprosy, it is treated as a social curse so that patients of leprosy are among the most untouchables of all the sick despite the fact that leprosy is one of the least infective of all the infective diseases and in 80% of the cases it is not infective at all.

This social prejudice against leprosy has its extension in governmental attitudes to lepers. They are often referred to as paupers. According to the Indian Leper Act of 1898, which was first enacted in Bengal, a leprosy patient was forbidden to sell food or drinks or use public wells or transport. Those employing lepers were subject to fines and leprosy has been a sufficient ground for divorce according to the Christian Marriage Act of 1872, the Muslim Marriage Act of 1934, the Special Marriage Act of 1954 and the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955. Leprosy patients are either not insured by the Life Insurance Corporation or insured at high premiums. Since there is no rational justification for any of these laws, the study group appointed by the government of India in 1981 has recommended that all such outmoded and derogatory Acts adversely affecting the fundamental rights of leprosy patients as citizens of India be repealed or amended and patients of leprosy be treated like those suffering from any other infectious disease.

20% Lepers in India

Leprosy used to be a worldwide disease. It has, however, been eradicated from the West and this happened even before any effective drugs against leprosy were discovered. At present there are nearly 11 million patients of which nearly 4 million or about one-third of the total are in India. Worse still, 30% of all new cases are among children and if untreated, as may be expected in most cases, they are destined to spend the rest of their lives as lepers with all the complications of the disease to manifest with age.

Ironically, the social prejudice against leprosy helps to make true the myth that leprosy is hereditary. By socially ostracizing lepers, our society makes the children of lepers spend all their time in close contact with patients of leprosy — their own parents as well as others in lepers' colonies. This increases greatly the chances of the children developing the disease before too long.

PROBLEMS IN CONTROL

The incubation period for leprosy, that is the time from the infection to early symptoms of the disease, is fairly long, from one to five years. Once the early symptoms appear, that is yellowish discoloration, loss of eyebrows, etc., the diagnosis is simple. There are two basic forms of leprosy: the lepromatous kind and the tuberculoid kind. It is the lepromatous kind that causes the skin ulcerations and deformities and the usual social stigma. The ulcerations result from the disease of underlying nerves, which cease to control the usual sensation and nutrition to the overlying skin. The basic treatment for leprosy over the last thirty years has been the drug dapsone, or DDS. The drug has to be administered over several years and progress of the patient monitored by simple tests like the skin test. Dapsone is cheap (about Rs 10 per year) and relatively nontoxic so that if the appropriate medical team and social care were provided, all patients of leprosy could be controlled.

An early problem in discovering new

and effective drugs and preventive methods has been the lack of a suitable animal model for leprosy. Most animals are resistant to the growth of leprosy-causing bacteria. In the past, experiments were done almost exclusively on mice. However, the life-span of a mouse is

It would seem that social prejudice is the biggest obstacle to the eradication of leprosy from India, especially in minimizing the chances of the children of leprosy patients becoming lepers themselves.

about three years and it takes about eight months for the bacterial infection to show laboratory pictures of the disease. A major breakthrough in leprosy research was made in 1971 when researchers in Louisiana discovered that leprosy can be effectively produced in nine-banded armadillos, an animal native to South America. Because the nine-banded armadillo can serve as a reservoir for growing leprosy bacteria, research has led to the development of a vaccine, which is promising but as yet at an experimental stage. In the meantime, early detection and treatment with dapsone remains the effective means of controlling and eradicating leprosy.

UNICEF, WHO

Leprosy is one of the six tropical diseases in the priority of the World Health Organization; the others are malaria, filaria (which causes swelling of legs, thighs and occasionally other parts), leishmaniasis (kalazar), schistosomiasis (common in Southeast Asia and China), and trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness, mainly found in Africa). The WHO programs aim at developing effective methods of diagnosis and treatment, and above all the development of a safe and effective vaccine. WHO funds nearly 39 research projects in 13 countries. The XII International Leprosy Congress was held in New Delhi during February of this year. Because of the high prevalence of leprosy among children, UNICEF plays an important role in the leprosy control program.

INDIA'S APPROACH

The National Leprosy Control Program, now called the National Leprosy Eradication Program, was launched in the first plan period during 1954-55. The approach was early detection through house-to-house surveys, education and community participation to remove social stigma and mass treatment with oral dapsone. This method of survey, education and treatment, called SET for short, was the basic pattern of leprosy control. Trained leprosy workers are provided at the rate of one per 20-25,000 rural and 30-70,000 urban population. For every 5 to 7 leprosy workers, one trained non-medical supervisor and for every 3 to 4 such supervisors a trained medical supervisor, a trained doctor, a laboratory technician and a health educator is provided.

Although these programs have made some progress, there has been no decrease in the incidence of leprosy in India. Moreover, the most effective program to date has been conducted by voluntary, charitable and missionary organizations whose workers have a healthier attitude towards patients of leprosy than do government workers. An impressive program is run in Wardha, perhaps due to the compassionate attitude of Gandhi to lepers.

It would seem that social prejudice is the biggest obstacle to the eradication of leprosy from India, especially in minimizing the chances of the children of leprosy patients becoming lepers themselves. The government has to take the lead by removing discriminatory laws, prohibiting discrimination against leprosy patients and educating its own doctors and other health workers on the nature of the disease.

Hepatitis Virus in Ahmedabad Kills Over 300

According to official reports, at least 547 people have died in Gujarat by May 20 due to virus Hepatitis B which is spreading unabated. Private hospitals in Baroda, one of the affected districts, have been instructed by the Health Department not to admit patients suffering from jaundice including Hepatitis B and instead send them to municipal and government hospitals. However, according to a senior doctor in a municipal hospital, none of the municipal hospitals had facilities for the Austrian antigen test for diagnosing the category of jaundice. Sections of Ahmedabad are also reportedly in the grip of hepatitis B virus. Most hospitals in Gujarat have not been disinfected and according to many doctors in civil hospitals, not a single doctor in some hospitals has been immunized against jaundice.

A vaccine for hepatitis B has been successfully tested on animals and humans and it may soon be available in the US, according to a recent announcement.



SHUKDEV BHACHECH

Doctors and hospital staff help remove beds for fumigation

Letter from Coalfield

(continued from page 21)

the accidents are enquired into because, according to the former Director, S. Sandaran, "we have neither machinery nor men." The net result was the unhindered growth of fire to such an alarming proportion that a senior student of Dhanbad School of Mines wondered how the Jharia coal belt is still surviving.

Whether fire is controlled or not, hundreds of millions of rupees are being spent for this purpose. But the people of Kenduadih, Ekra and other villages whose land and houses were destroyed by the fire are still running from door to door for rehabilitation and compensation. Who cares for them?

from Frontier

Supreme Court Decision

(continued from page 16)

that both of them must have met an unnatural death." Prima facie, "it would be an offense of murder."

Who is individually or collectively the perpetrator of the crime or is responsible for their disappearance will have to be determined by "a proper, thorough and responsible police investigation," they ordained. And without casting doubt on anyone, the court said that "prima facie there is material on record to reach an affirmative conclusion that both C. Daniel and C. Paul have met an unnatural death," and also, "the Union of India cannot disown the responsibility in this behalf."

The judges took another unusual step and directed the Registrar of the court to forward all the papers of the case, "accompanied by a writ of mandamus to the Superintendent of Police, Ukhral, to be treated as information of a cognizable offense and to commence investigation as prescribed by the relevant provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure." This writ makes it obligatory on the state to commence investigation as part of its duty.

The Indian Express commented in an editorial: "The judgment is of considera-

Diary of a Theater Workshop

This book is the daily record of a theater workshop conducted in a village in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, as part of a six-month training course organized by the Sucheta Kripalani Shiksha Niketan.

The workshop has two purposes: to increase the participants' self-confidence and their ability to understand and communicate with the people with whom they work, and to enable the peasant communities with whom the participants in the workshop come into contact to acquire these same values and capacities. The means used to achieve these purposes is to act out local problems using traditional folk forms of expression.

About 35 young people of both sexes took part in the workshop. They were all grassroots level workers and almost all had an intermediate level of education. Each one kept a diary of the activities carried out. The diary is based on these personal notes and recounts how the work of the group develops, the various reactions that occur, the dynamics of interaction, the exchange of knowledge and experience. There is a constant effort to make dramatic art accessible to ordinary people.

The theater can be an effective tool for community development, encouraging active participation by the people. The dramatized language is easy to understand, and people identify with the various characters and the problems they have to face. This makes it possible for the theater to be followed by a discussion on the challenges facing the group. Community theater is a starting point for conscientization.

The book is available from
Kamla Bhasin
FFHC/AD Program Officer
c/o FAO Regional Office
55 Max Mueller Marg
New Delhi 110 003

(information from publisher)

for providing educational concessions to the children of the groups included in this category.

While the task undertaken by Dharampal in bringing together the available documents on Indian indigenous education is certainly an arduous and commendable one. If the book has to serve its purpose, viz., to comprehend the reality of late 18th and early 19th century Indian society and its strengths and weaknesses, a lot more needs to be done. And, so long as that is not being done, the book is remain an attempt to justify the injustices of traditional Indian society.

ble importance as the Army has the power to arrest and question any person under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, which has been notified in designated areas from time to time, especially in the Northeast. But it applies equally to persons detained by the civil authorities on suspicion, or on specific charges, or for questioning and of whom no more is heard. There was the famous Rajan case in Kerala during the Emergency. There are also ever so many cases of killings of Naxalites and others in so-called encounters, which are no more than staged murders. There have also been cases of torture leading to death, though in such cases the body is produced and either cremated or buried or handed over to any next of kin. This has become a steady routine in certain states and cannot be too strongly condemned. The Supreme Court's judgment is salutary and timely insofar as it reminds those in authority that they cannot get away with murder and that they will be accountable through a writ of habeas corpus. The murder case in Manipur must now be vigorously pursued. It is no defense to say that unconventional methods have to be used against suspected insurgents, terrorists, Naxalites and others if law enforcement and security personnel are to produce "results." This is dangerous reasoning."

Conference on Human Rights Violations in Sri Lanka

SEKHAR RAMAKRISHNAN

An international conference on human rights violations in Sri Lanka was held in Madras in April. The conference was addressed by local politicians, Tamil leaders from Sri Lanka, and foreign delegates.

Amirthalingam, head of TULF, said he could not keep the talks going as Tamils are getting killed every day. He said after five months of talks, they were back to square one. President Jayawardene was only interested in stalling till his visit to the US.

Yogeswaran, former MP in Sri Lanka, said "Sinhalese and Tamils will live as brothers again but only as citizens of two different states."

INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL

David Selbourne, the British journalist, demanded that an international tribunal of jurists be set up to inquire into the massacre of Tamils in Sri Lanka in July 1983. This demand was supported by Karl Hornick Nyaagard, leader of the Norwegian Human Rights Committee, and other foreign delegates.

Selbourne: "What kind of a democracy is Sri Lanka where the President is a 'prisoner of circumstances' and openly confessing that he could not control genocide of a section of his own population?"

Selbourne said such a tribunal was necessary since the Sri Lankan government had failed to institute any action on jail officials responsible for the massacre in Welikade prison.

Quoting Jayawardene's interview with India Today, Selbourne wondered what kind of a democracy was Sri Lanka where the President was a "prisoner of circumstances" and openly confessing that he could not control genocide of a section of his own population.

Selbourne also suggested that the meeting should demand the immediate release of Father Singaraya, Prof. Nirmala Nityanandan and other Tamil political prisoners in Sri Lanka.

The journalist, who was earlier expelled by the Colombo government, recalled the events and said he was intimidated even after his return to Britain, obviously by Sinhalese fanatics. He said that even when he criticized violation of civil liberties during the Emergency in India, he was never threatened.

REFUGEES IN CANADA

Jayee Yedid of the Quebec Bar Association and Amnesty International spoke of her experiences with Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in Canada. She said the group of refugees who arrived in Canada last summer included people whose families were broken up in the riots. The youths carried marks of torture like cigarette burns. Some of them had internal injuries and even after one year they were vomiting blood. There were permanent injuries to the limbs. The psychological damage was worse. Men and women woke up in the night in terror, screaming.

Smita Patil's Movies Being Screened in France

Two retrospectives of Smita Patil, actress of new wave films, are being organized in France for June and July. The first festival is being organized in Paris by Greek-French film director Costa Gavras, famous for his movies Z and Missing. Gavras is the president of Cinematheque Francaise which is known for promotion of avant-garde cinema in France. Among films to be screened include Manthan, Bhumika, Chakra and Bazaar.



AMNESTY ASKS FOR PROBE

Amnesty International has demanded a comprehensive inquiry by an independent and impartial body into the killings of 53 Tamil political prisoners in Welikade Prison in Colombo during the height of ethnic violence on July 25 and 27 last year.

The AI statement said the magisterial inquiry of July 26 had held that the prison officials were unable to identify any of the persons responsible for the killings. Despite the official investigations, 18 prisoners were attacked and killed on the next day, July 27.

AI is unaware whether investigations have been completed or any findings published.

The Amnesty attaches great importance to an independent inquiry in the light of reports it has received from the surviving prisoners alleging involvement of prison personnel at least in the second bout of killings on July 27. Its concern was further compounded when the inter-

national committee of the Red Cross was ordered out of the country on August 9.

A comprehensive inquiry by an independent and impartial body is essential for ensuring the safety of Tamil detainees in government custody.

The Amnesty's recent mission to the island revealed that there was a pattern of serious and consistent violations of human rights. There were allegations that people had been tortured both in army camps and in police custody.

The Sri Lankan government's inability to initiate effective measures against those responsible for the violations and its preparedness to promote several officials allegedly involved in past violations has created an impression that the security forces could act with impunity, the statement said.

The Amnesty urged the government to immediately rescind Emergency Regulation 15A and order that inquiry proceedings be held in all cases of killings by armed forces as a step towards preventing further "extrajudicial killings" by security forces.

The immunity to members of the armed services under this regulation from prosecution in courts for "extrajudicial killings" has led to a situation where civilians could be butchered and bodies burnt at public places, the statement said.

The Amnesty was deeply concerned about the latest amendment to provide the army involved in "anti-terrorist activities" with special powers of arrest, immunity from prosecution and suspension of magisterial inquiries into the death of persons killed during "security operations."

What Happened in Bhiwandi? Carnage That Had to Happen

AMRITA ABRAHAM

The one indisputable fact about the communal violence in the Bombay region since May 18 is the primary role of the Shiv Sena. The pattern of violence in the three foci of Bhiwandi, Thane and central/suburban Bombay varied substantially but each followed closely on the kind of organization the Shiv Sena commands and the kind of local mobilization it has been able to achieve.

In the single most concentrated area of violence, in the Muslim-dominated powerloom township of Bhiwandi (60 km northeast of Bombay), 500-1000 strong mobs attacked huge bastis on the outskirts of the town at dawn while the center was hit later by small massed attacks.

Another feature that supports the Shiv Sena-related pattern of violence is the fact that public property and establishments escaped the attention of the mobs; essential services functioned throughout. It was Shiv Sena violence directed against the Muslims; the Hindu community at large was passive and Muslim retaliation was low.

The Shiv Sena's virulent anti-Muslim propaganda has been going on without pause throughout Bombay-Thane and in districts like Nasik ever since January, culminating in Thackeray's April 21 speech at Chowpatty Beach, Bombay. The switch from the Shiv Sena's characteristic but limiting jobs-for-sons-of-



Raghu Rai

An old woman who lost her husband and son sits in mute misery

In urban Thane, where the Shiv Sena controlled the municipality from 1974 to 1979 and where its writ is unchallenged in many localities, Muslims individually or in hutment colonies were singled out so thoroughly that at the end there was scarcely a Hindu name in the official list of victims.

In central and suburban Bombay, the pattern of violence was what a high police official describes as the result of typical hit and run tactics of Shiv Sena gangs. The official toll of the dead and injured in Bombay city and suburbs in incidents other than police action ran as follows: dead - 25 Muslims, 11 Hindus; injured - 228 Muslims, 119 Hindus.

the-soil platform to a more generalized Hindu militancy has been in evidence for the last three to four years. The definitive point occurred at the Dadar convention in January this year. At a huge public rally, Thackeray hammered home three points: (i) no more alliance with Congress(I); (ii) contact had been made with Hindu organizations such as the Patit Pawan Sanghatana [see separate story on Dhulia], the Hindu Ekta Andolan, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [the one that held a conference in New York in early July], the Maratha Mahasangh (at one time in the vanguard of anti-reservation propaganda), and most of all the Hindu Sena

(continued on page 14)

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